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THE 'LIVELY PEGGY.'

BY STANLEY J. WEYMAN.

CHAPTER IV.

BUT if Peggy could mask her feelings at need she was not the only one at the Rectory who had feelings, and could hide them. When, some six months before this, Sir Albery Wyke's curricie had begun to be noticed, waiting in the Rectory Lane, it had been to Augusta's charms that his visits were attributed. She was the elder sister and the beauty, no assembly in the county was perfect without her, and excellent match as Sir Albery was, the turn of Augusta's swan-like neck, her regular features and the sweetness of her smile were held to deserve no less. The thing had gone so far that more than one—Charlotte Bicester among others—had offered their sly congratulations. When Sir Albery, therefore, had first hung in the wind, and then had gone on the other tack, in obvious pursuit of Peggy, Augusta had felt the unfairness of the shift. Her pride had smarted; and though, so far, Wyke had not spoken, though the handkerchief remained in his hand, the elder sister doubted not that it would be cast, and that, restive and wayward as Peggy was, it would be taken up. Her father, she knew, would see to that.

Even so, and let it stand to her credit, Augusta's smile did not vary, nor her placidity fail. But as she sat at her tambour frame where the light of the three tall windows of the drawing-room fell on her matchless complexion and her finely turned arm, she meditated long on the position. It was not so much of the fickle lover that she thought, as of her sister, and her sister's private concerns. For Peggy might be adroit, she might hoodwink her father and blind the servants—though what they knew was less certain—but if she fancied that she could loop the curtain of one of the windows that looked on the sea, and repeat the manœuvre whenever it

suited her, without awakening a sister's suspicions, she was mistaken. Augusta had marked the act, and found occasion to unloop the curtain. The event had justified her stratagem ; she had seen Peggy move carelessly to the curtain and loop it anew. Thereafter Augusta had watched and she had seen other things ; among them a young man who passed often upon the water between the Cove and Beremouth, and frequently looked up at the tall headland and the windows that crowned it. She had drawn her conclusions.

As her shapely hand rose and fell, and she passed the needle through the strained linen, in the stillness of the room that looked on sky and sea, Augusta pondered how she might turn the thing to advantage. She knew that one word to her father would bring Peggy's cloud-castle toppling about her ears. But she discerned with equal clearness that that would not advance her own interests ; she knew her father's methods, and she was sure that exposed to the pressure that he would exert, a pressure as irresistible as it was gentle, the most wilful Peggy would give way.

She gave much thought to the matter, and sought with patience an answer to the riddle. At length, and by chance, her mind fastened on the allusion to the Cottage, that, leased to the Blighs by Budgen, was the Rector's property. Later she heard that Budgen had taken the younger Bligh into his service ; and on that she began to see her way. Not clearly, nor very certainly yet ; it was a delicate operation that she contemplated, and much would depend upon whether her judgment of Peggy's character proved correct. Still she had now a line that she could follow, if the opportunity presented itself.

On a fine Sunday, a fortnight or so after Charles Bligh's disgrace became known, she fancied that her time had come. The long morning service at an end, the congregation, instead of streaming away by twos and threes down the winding road that led to the town, paused in chattering groups about the west door to await the exit of the Beremouth Fencibles, a troop that Wyke had raised at his own expense. The corps had attended the service, and to see them, gay in their red facings, drawn up, put through the firelock exercises and dismissed, was a show that sunshine and Sunday leisure made attractive. Nor was it the commonalty only whom the sight detained, or who viewed with sympathy or apathy, as the case might be, the old Captain limping to and fro, as he saw to the dressing of the line. The Rectory party lingered, waiting for Sir Albercy, and from their station, a little apart by the low wall of the Rectory Lane, they too

eyed the shabby half-pay officer and shaped their various opinions of him.

'It is really disgraceful!' Augusta remarked—she spoke with graceful languor. 'Sir Alberty should be rid of him!'

Charlotte Bicester took her up—Charlotte whose bluntness and oddity were the torment of her mother's life. 'What? That dear old man?' she exclaimed. 'Why, I love him! He's so neat! He's the only soldier among them! Do look at Dunch the barber,' she continued with amusement, 'treading on the tails of his own coat! And Sir Alberty choking in his stock, poor dear, and as stiff as the men are slouching! Why, I think the old man's a picture. What has he done, Augusta?'

'Quite enough to make you love him, my dear,' Augusta replied, 'if you love lame ducks! But it's not what he has done, but what his son has done—if you ask me!'

'What? The sins of the children on the fathers?' Charlotte replied smartly. 'But surely that's bad scripture. And what has the son done? Got drunk once too often? Why, if that is all, and it is all I've heard——'

'On duty?'

'Well, he's paid for it, poor devil! Or so I hear.'

Lady Bicester raised her hands in horror. 'Charlotte!' she cried. 'My dear, what things you say!'

Charlotte winked at Peggy. 'I learn them from the gentlemen, mother,' she said, 'when they come up a little free from the Rector's third bottle! I don't freeze them as Augusta does, and I see them as they are. But gentlemen will be gentlemen, my lady says, and we must make allowances for them.'

'Do you call him a gentleman?' Augusta asked blandly.

But that, as her sister expected, was more than Peggy, who so far had been silent, could bear. 'At any rate he has seen service!' she said.

'Bravo, Peggy!' Charlotte cried. 'What do you say, Mr. Fareham?'

But Mr. Fareham, a younger son whose parents would willingly have taken Charlotte into the family—for, though plain, she had money—had fallen instead into Augusta's toils. 'I think a man should carry his liquor like a gentleman,' he said succinctly.

'Then he'd carry a lot!' Charlotte retorted. 'But there, it's over, and they are dismissing. And do look at Dunch! I'm sure that man will fall over his coat-tails before he's done!' Then, 'Peggy! Where are you going?' she cried.

But Peggy was out of hearing. She had not come with any intention of misbehaving herself. On the contrary she had formed all sorts of wise and prudent resolutions. But her temper and her feelings proved, as often before, too much for her, and already she was half-way across the churchyard, from which the Fencibles, mingling with the crowd, were beginning to flow away. Sir Alberty saw her moving in his direction and thought she was coming to him; and the flattered man greeted her approach with a fatuous smile. But Peggy passed by him without a glance. She greeted the old Captain, holding out her hand to him.

'Now, isn't that like Peggy!' Augusta murmured. She shrugged her handsome shoulders. 'Silly, silly girl!'

But Charlotte clapped her hands. 'Bravo, Peggy!' she repeated.

Dr. Portnal had left the vestry a moment before and was approaching the group. He overheard her words. 'Why silly?' he asked, with stately geniality. 'And why Bravo? What is it, my dear, that has evoked such opposite sentiments?'

'Only a little quixotry—on Peggy's part,' Augusta replied, her object apparently to pass the matter by. 'I think we may go now. The show is over.'

But she did not move at once. She paused long enough to allow the Rector's eyes to alight on Peggy, who was in the act of parting from the Captain. 'I see,' Dr. Portnal said, 'I see. But there'—he shrugged his shoulders indulgently—'old heads do not grow on young shoulders.'

'They'd look very odd if they did!' the irrepressible Charlotte retorted.

'To be sure! To be sure, my dear. You are right. However, let us be going.' But as they turned in a body to cross the lane that divided them from the Rectory he fell back and joined Wyke. 'Peggy is impulsive,' he said good-humouredly. 'A good girl, but she acts before she thinks.'

'But she acts!' Wyke answered warmly. 'And upon my soul I honour her for it. I had a word with the old man before the service, and he's cast down, terribly cast down, poor chap. He feels this blow, and feels, I think, that it is his fault. It has gone deep with him.'

But the Rector could not go as far as that. 'It ought to,' he said drily. 'It ought to, my friend.'

'Well, may be you are right. But I think as Miss Peggy does, and I honour her for it, and—and in fact,' Wyke continued, swept away by his enthusiasm, 'I can't be silent any longer, Rector,

I want to—to speak to you—about her.’ And with an ingenuous blush dyeing his candid face he drew his companion a few steps down the lane, until they reached and stood under that very open arch, looking down on the sparkling sea, which had seen other things happen. There, with his hand resting on the sill on which Bligh had leant while he listened to Peggy’s pleading, Wyke poured out the hopes that the other was well prepared to hear. For two minutes they talked, the young man telling the old, old tale that came so new from his heart. By and by the elder man wrung his hand.

‘God bless you, my boy!’ he said. ‘God bless you! You have made me very happy. There is nothing that I could wish for my girl beyond this—and I shall keep her near me and I am thankful for that. I see the fairest prospect of happiness for you both, and nothing on my part, you may be sure, shall be wanting to fulfil your hopes. But she’s young, Peggy’s young, and I think you will be wise to let me prepare her. She is young, and you know the old adage—“they flee, and fleeing look behind!” Ha! Ha! Yes, you had better let me drop a word to her and sound her. But I have no doubt, no doubt at all, my dear fellow, that all will turn out as you wish.’

Not without reluctance and not without a little opposition Wyke agreed, and the two, after another word or two, went into the house. The upshot was that later in the afternoon the Rector looked into the drawing-room. He found Augusta alone, and with his hand on the door he asked her where her sister was.

Augusta read his face, and knew in a moment what had happened. ‘Has Sir Albery spoken?’ she asked, with a smile.

‘He has, my dear. And I am not surprised. I have seen it coming for some time.’

‘Of course. But——’ Augusta paused on the word. She looked thoughtfully at her father.

‘Well?’ The Rector did not understand. ‘What is it, my dear?’

‘Well, I think,’ Augusta said, choosing her words, and her tone was a little doubtful, ‘I think I should not speak to her at once, sir—though you know best, no doubt.’

The Rector closed the door. He was an arbitrary man but he was no fool and he had a high opinion of his elder daughter’s judgment. ‘Why?’ he asked. ‘Why do you think so?’

And still Augusta hesitated. ‘Well, sir,’ she said reluctantly, ‘if you ask me, I am afraid that—that there is a little prepossession on her side—at present.’

'Prepossession!' The Rector stared. 'Prepossession? What on earth do you mean, Augusta?'

'I am afraid, sir, there is something,' she replied in a serious tone. 'Peggy is young and thoughtless—you know, sir, what she is, and I fear that she has let herself see a little too much of—of young Bligh, to be plain, sir.'

'Young Bligh!' the Rector ejaculated, his eyes almost starting from his head. And for a moment his anger fell on Augusta. 'Impossible! Impossible!' he cried. 'You must be dreaming, girl. Young Bligh! A daughter of mine see too much of—I don't understand you. You cannot be thinking of what you are saying, Augusta! Bligh!'

But Augusta was firm. 'I fear I am right, sir,' she replied gravely. 'I have said nothing to you, for I hoped that it would pass off—and that he would leave. Perhaps I was wrong to—to be silent. No doubt I was wrong. But I am afraid, I am afraid—that there have been meetings, sir.'

'And you never told me!' The Rector's brow was very black now. He glowered at Augusta as if she were the one in fault, and any other than Augusta would have trembled before his wrath.

But Augusta knew where she stood. 'I hoped that it would pass off, sir,' she pleaded meekly. 'I see I was wrong.'

'You were wrong, very wrong!' he said. He strode across the room and returned, his step heavy. 'Very wrong! I am appalled, appalled by what you tell me—if indeed you are not mistaken. Bligh? But I cannot believe it! I cannot believe it! How can such a state of things have come about? How?' He was horror-struck; amazement and wrath battled in him with incredulity. 'How, girl? Explain yourself!'

'Indeed, sir, I hardly know,' Augusta pleaded penitently. 'I have found it hard to believe it myself. But Peggy—you know, sir, what she is! She is not like other people.'

'Like! She is like no decent people if this be true! I never heard of such a thing! Never! Never! But if she has lost her senses, by heaven, I have not! And I shall put an end to it, and an instant end to it—this very hour! Go, Augusta, go to her this moment, and send her to me. Send her to me at once, and I will tell her what I think of her! She shall not disgrace herself under my roof! Bligh? Heaven above us! That scamp, that reprobate, that sot!'

Augusta rose, knowing well that the critical moment had come,

and that to play her part efficiently, though she had more than once rehearsed it in her thoughts, would need all her wits.

She moved towards the door, but mid-way she paused. She looked at the Rector, and her face expressed just such a measure of doubt as suggested inquiry, as invited a question. 'I think, sir,' she said very seriously, 'there may be a better way of dealing with this—this folly, if you will forgive me for saying so.'

'Folly?' he retorted in his anger. 'Call it madness! Madness! Disgraceful madness! No, the thing must be stamped out at once! At once!'

'Still——'

She broke off, but she looked at him with so much meaning in her face that, angry as he was, the Rector hesitated. He frowned. At length, 'Well? Well, girl, what is it you wish to say?'

She knew then that she had won, but she only threw more humility into her voice. 'It is this, sir. I think it may perhaps be wiser—to begin at the other end.'

He stared. 'At the other end? What do you mean?' But he was plainly arrested by her words.

'I think, sir, I should get rid of him—before I spoke to Peggy. She is—I am afraid that she is very wilful. And opposition may—may not have the effect we desire, sir. But with him gone——'

'With him—ah!' There was a new note in his voice.

'With him gone,' Augusta explained, 'I think the thing would die away quietly. He is working at Budgen's, or so I am told. And a word to Budgen——' Augusta paused to let the hint sink in. 'Then I remember,' she continued, 'that you said something about the Cottage, sir? Something might be done about that, might it not? And—and with them both gone'—Augusta spoke slowly, giving him time to reflect—'that which you wish would come about naturally, and without friction. The fancy would die away and no one be the wiser.'

The Rector pondered. He saw that in his anger he had lost sight of his habitual prudence. And women were clever in their own concerns. He was impressed.

'Peggy is impulsive, as you know, sir,' Augusta continued, seeing that all was going as she would have it. 'And if she is opposed she will think herself a martyr. Whereas, left to herself, the fancy will die away.'

'She deserves to be whipped!' he exclaimed, convinced, but unwilling to give way too quickly. 'Upon my soul it is incredible!

Are you serious, Augusta? I cannot even now believe it. Are you sure, girl?

'I am afraid I am, sir,' Augusta replied with sorrowful decision.

'Good heavens! Good heavens! Well, I will think over it,' he said more quietly. 'I am too much shocked, I am too deeply shocked to think calmly now. A wretched drink-sodden man working at Budgen's! That low, disgraceful, sottish scamp and a daughter of mine! It's—it's incredible. But if I give way to you, you must have an eye on her. You must watch her, girl. If this be really as you say, she is not to be trusted.'

Augusta assured him that she would watch; adding that she was certain that there was no immediate danger. Even then he did not say that he would take the course that she suggested, but she knew him, and she was confident that he would. Despotie as he was, the plan consorted better with his usual methods than open and violent measures.

But the effort had been great, and when he had left her, and then only, Augusta breathed freely. She had succeeded—so far. It remained to be seen if her judgment of her sister's character was correct; if an attack on one whom she loved would drive Peggy to do that to which no harsh treatment and no pressure applied to herself would compel her.

CHAPTER V.

DR. PORTNAL chose his time with his usual discretion, and the rattle of the hammers and the caulking-mallets had ceased for the day, when with a gait as measured and stately as the steepness of the path permitted, he made his way down to the Cove. He had considered how he would act. In the first heat of passion he had been inclined to re-open with Wyke the question of the elder Bligh's employment. But on more mature thought he had discarded the notion. He saw that it might lead him further than was prudent. Wyke might refuse, or might press for reasons; and his reasons the Rector was not prepared to state. Budgen, on the other hand, was in his power, and though Dr. Portnal would have preferred to make a clean sweep of the pair, it was the young man whom he had to fear.

The face of the cliff, with its chequers of golden gorse and its

sprinkling of white-harled cottages, was still warm with sunshine when he reached the shore at its foot. The slips and the shed and Budgen's creeper-clad homestead which stood some way back in the cleft of the Cove lay already in shadow. Peace brooded over the little bay, the cries of the gulls came softened by distance, the lapping of the wavelets on the strand whispered softly of evening and the rest from labour. A boat, putting in to the Beremouth jetty, was gliding past the bluff, the fall of the sails and the voices of the men marking rather than breaking the silence.

Absorbed in his purpose, the Rector paid little heed to these things, to the lapping of the waves, or the fall of the yard as it struck the deck. Such sounds were commonplaces to him. But as he approached the shed his thoughts and the stillness were interrupted by a sound as unexpected as it was unwelcome—the sound of angry voices. He had chosen his hour with a view to finding Budgen alone, and he paused; and, though he had no wish to hear what was passing in the shed, he heard.

'Four pound a month? Why should I gi' you four pound a month?' It was Budgen's voice, raised in anger, that he heard. 'Or three pound, or one pound, you lazy, loafing, good-for-naught? Or a ha'penny for the matter o' that! Confound your impudence!'

'Well,' a sulky voice, that Dr. Portnal did not at once identify, replied, 'you know for what very well.'

'I know I'm a fool—a fool to ha' begun with it! Ever to ha' let such a vagabond as you cross my step! But I warn you, you be going too far! Two pound a month, and it be two pound too much, I'll 'llow you! And that's my last word, my lad!'

'I'll 'list, then!' the sulky voice rejoined. 'That's what I'll do! And that'll be the end of it.'

'Then 'list and be hanged to you!' the other replied. 'But it's talk, you fool! Talk! You've too much care o' your lazy carcase to 'list! And I be a fool to listen to you, and be diddled by you! But that's my last word. You can take your two pound, or go to the devil your own way. Not a penny more do you get o' mine!'

The Rector had heard enough, and he walked in upon them. He knew now who the second speaker was, and he bent a stormy brow on him as he entered. 'You'd far better let the press-gang take him, Budgen,' he said sternly. 'Far better!' And then, addressing the offender, 'You are a disgrace to the parish,' he said. 'A standing disgrace, Fewster! If the Justices had done their

duty they would have sent you to sea long ago. Now begone, and keep out of my sight, or I shall remember your case at the next sittings. You are wrong, Budgen, very wrong,' he continued, as Joe, silenced and crushed, crawled out of sight, 'to support your nephew in his bad courses. Stop supplies—stop supplies, man, and let him go to sea, or enlist if he chooses.'

But Budgen, harried by Joe and less confident of the wisdom of defiance than he would have it appear, was in a more churlish mood than usual—which was saying a good deal. He feared the Rector, but he detested him also. 'Ay!' he replied as rudely as he dared. 'But that might suit your reverence better than me.'

'Don't talk nonsense,' the Rector rejoined.

'Nonsense? Depends from which side you look at it,' Budgen retorted. 'There's a lot too much hangs on him for me to send him drifting. And, saving your presence, a lot too much for you the other way round!'

'Ah! You mean that he's the last life in your lease?'

'That's it.' Budgen nodded gloomily. He had come forward to meet the Rector, and from where he stood his eye could travel over the things that made up his life, the things that he loved; his house and snug garden nestling under the cliff, the Cove, the slips, the smack he was slowly building—mere ribs as yet: a boat or two drawn above high-water mark, and below all these, and still washed by the tide, the blackened timbers, sodden and weed-grown, of a forsaken hulk. To him they were all dear, all familiar—familiar as the bluff that shut him off from Beremouth and from the troublesome world of cares and duns, or as the sea across which his craft came and went. Budgen did not put into words his love for the Cove and its surroundings, the green headland that met his gaze morning by morning, and the shimmering sea; but he did love them, and his grasp of them was hard and greedy, for he knew them to be ever in danger. 'That's where it is,' he repeated gloomily. 'He's my last life, as you well know, sir, and a lot hangs on him for me. Now this talk of peace,' he continued, glad perhaps to lead the talk another way. 'It would not suit you nor me, your reverence. Do you think there's aught in it?' His eyes bent on the Rector's face strove to read it. He had puzzled over his last newspaper, a stray copy a fortnight old, and had made little of it.

'We must not say it would not suit us,' the Rector replied more mildly. 'We must not put our interests before the common good, Budgen. God forbid! And why do you say that it would not suit us?'

The boat-builder spat contemptuously on the shingle. He knew what he was talking about now. 'The *Peggy*—what worth would she be—in a peace?' he asked. 'She's built for speed, not for cargo, and all the freight we could put in her hold wouldn't pay the fok'sle wages. Night they light the fires on that there bluff for a peace she's done! You may run her ashore on the rocks there for all the value she'd be! And what I'm asking is, is there aught in it, sir?'

The Rector shook his head. 'I am afraid I cannot say,' he replied. 'There's certainly talk of it, but there has been talk before. In any case a settlement will take time—many months I suspect. When do you look for her to come in, Budgen?'

The boat-builder raised his hat and rubbed his head. 'Well, she'll ha' been thirty days on her ground come to-morrow, all being well,' he said. 'And she's victualled for thirty days more. Prize or no prize, I reckon she'll be in this day month at latest, if so be no harm happen her. But if she's in luck she may come in any day, and the sooner the better!'

The Rector nodded. 'Yes,' he said. 'And I hope she may be in luck, for your sake, Budgen.'

'Ay, your reverence,' Budgen replied with a sardonic look. 'And your own.'

The Rector passed that by. 'I should be better satisfied if I had more faith in your skipper,' he said. 'Are you sure of Cope-stake, Budgen? I've my misgivings. A man who talks as he does, must discourage the men.'

Budgen grinned. 'If he talked the same afloat as ashore, ay! And if talk was what mattered, I'd allow he'd take the spunk out of a sucking Nelson, would Ozias, to hear him. But 'tisin't talk that goes at sea, and, Lord bless you, Ozias with a linstock in his hand and Ozias at the Keppel Head, they're two men. To listen to him to home, he's the saddest old-woman Methody 'tween this and the Land's End. But the fok'sle hand that trusts to that when a bit of the right bunting's in sight—well, I reckon, your reverence, he'd never know what hit him!'

The Rector pursed up his lips. He only knew Ozias ashore and he was doubtful. 'Well,' he said, 'I hope it is as you say, Budgen. But he's not lucky.'

'No, he's not lucky. There's no gainsaying that. All the same, I wish I were as certain Ozias'd go another cruise, as I am that he's as dogged, ay, and as spry too, as any skipper that sails out of hereabout. But it's luck we want—and Ozias the same. I

know the loss of the *Pride* nearly broke me, and it's time the tide turned, or'—the boat-builder paused and wiped his brow—'ay, nearly broke me it did, as you know, sir, and no one so well. But I'm not afeared of Ozias.'

Dr. Portnal nodded, and for a moment the two stood pondering the case. Then, 'However, I did not come to-day,' the Rector resumed in a brisker tone, 'to talk about this, but about another matter, Budgen. I hear that you have been so foolish as to take young Bligh into your place.'

The man bristled up. 'An' if I have?'

The Rector raised his hand. 'It won't do,' he said. 'That's all, and all that is to be said. It won't do, Budgen. You must get rid of him. Understand me, I will not have it. To replace one sot by another is a folly I will not countenance! You must get rid of the man at once.'

If Budgen had never hated the Rector before he hated him then. 'I don't know about that!' he said in his most crabbed tone. 'There's two to that.'

'But I do,' the Rector replied quietly. 'Do you hear? There is only one to it, Budgen. The man is a disgrace to us all, and he must go.'

'Not till I've had my say,' Budgen insisted doggedly. 'Nor till you have heard me, sir! No. The case is altered. Clean altered. Joe, he was out and out good for naught—not one hour's work did I get out of him. But the Lieutenant—'

'Pooh! man,' the Rector said contemptuously. 'He's no more Lieutenant now than I am!'

'The Lieutenant,' Budgen repeated stubbornly, 'he's worth the money I give him and more. And more! He keeps my books as never before, and the men as was constantly bickering with Joe works for him willing. Be I in the house or be I in the shed, the work's done, and not one drop o' drink have I seen him take since he've been with me! Swore off it, good!'

The Rector shook his head. 'When the devil was ill,' he said; 'you know the rest, Budgen. But I have said enough. I am not here to argue with you, and what I say must be done. I will not have a man who has disgraced the parish and himself employed here. And that is all—or we quarrel. And you best know whether that will suit you.'

If Budgen could have killed with a wish, Dr. Portnal would have returned over the bluff feet foremost. But Budgen could not, and he swallowed his wrath. 'Needs must,' he snarled, with as much insolence as he dared show, 'when the parson drives.'

‘Budgen!’

But Budgen turned his back, and did it rudely. ‘You’ve got your will,’ he flung over his shoulder, ‘for I am no better than a slave, and I have to do your bidding! But let’s hear no more of it!’ He went into the shed without more, and seeing him in that temper the Rector, offended as he was, thought it wise to let him go.

The visitor’s step had ceased to sound on the shingle, and he had climbed half-way up the steep slope before Budgen showed himself again. Then, finding his enemy still within sight, he threw a vicious curse after him. ‘Ay, you great, big, black blot!’ he said. ‘There you go atrampling and atrampling, no matter what’s underfoot. You’d send Joe to sea, would you, and get him killed off? As is the last life between you and the Cove, so as you may shift me and get a thumping big fine for re-letting! I know you! And you’d get rid o’ the young chap as never crossed you—now I wonder why. I wonder what is at the bottom of that, you d—d black blot! I don’t know now, but may be I shall. And if I weren’t so deep in your books, with as good as nothing I can call my own, I’m hanged if you should have your way! No, d—n me, I’d——’

He did not say what he would do, for at that moment the Rector passed out of sight over the brow, and the angry man turned into the shed and for some moments stood, staring absently at the lines of the *Peggy*. But his grievance still worked in him and worried him. ‘He’s got his claws into me, ay, too far into me,’ he muttered. And for the hundredth time he reckoned up his position. The *Pride*—now in French hands—he had owned one-half of her, or thirty-two sixths-fourths as he put it—and Dr. Portnal had owned a quarter. The rest had lain with the crew and some small adventurers, tradesmen in Beremouth. But he had borrowed of the Rector to pay his share of her cruising cost, and the money was gone with the *Pride*, but the debt remained, and was ever growing. Of the *Peggy* his share had been also one-half—once; but the loss of the *Pride* had scared the small people who had interests in her, and he had bought them out cheap, making as he had fancied at the time a good bargain. But there again he had borrowed the money from the Rector, charging the *Peggy* in his favour, and mortgaging the rest of his property for what it was worth. In outward show he was an independent, well-to-do man, envied and prosperous. His slips and his moulding-loft, his boats built and building, his cosy house and the cottages scattered up and down the Cove made a fine show. But they were his on a lease for three lives only; and the last of the three, Joe Fewster’s, alone remained, and

stood between him and ruin. The lease was charged, with the *Peggy* and the rest, in the Rector's favour, and if the *Peggy* were lost the Rector would come down on all that he had. He would have no mercy, and the less as he owned a quarter of the *Peggy* and would himself be a loser if ill-luck befell her. Then equally, if Joe died, was Budgen a ruined man. But he refused to face that. That meant the end indeed, the end of everything, of the Cove and all that he had.

For he loved the Cove, as has been said. And he saw it hanging on the life of a rogue and the luck of a ship. He was not a happy man as he trudged with bent shoulders along the path to his warm house—the path that his father's feet had trodden, and his own feet had worn through fifty years.

CHAPTER VI.

WHEN Lady Bicester became the tenant of the Grange, a house that lay a mile inland in the lap of the valley that opens on the sea at Beremouth, her welcome was not over-warm. The widow of a Mayor of Bristol who had gone up to St. James's with an Address and been knighted—the neighbouring squires referred to him slightly as one of Peg Nicholson's knights—she had three things against her, her newness, her title, and her money. But her ladyship had known where she stood. She had evinced a proper respect for old estates and landed dignities, and, giving all their due and a little more, she had gradually insinuated herself into the tolerance and the drawing-rooms of her neighbours.

In the execution of this task she had been hindered rather than helped by her daughter; at any rate in her own opinion. Charlotte had shown herself from the first incurably blind to her inferior position. Her blunt address and the easy confidence with which she encountered all comers, from Dunch the barber, who did not matter, to Sir Alberty Wyke and the Lord Lieutenant who did, inflicted a hundred stabs on her mother's self-consciousness; and many a time had her ladyship winced in her company. But whether Charlotte's frankness set off her mother's complaisance, or more was tacitly allowed to a second generation, the girl had somehow been accepted as an equal, where her mother entered on sufferance. References to her lack of beauty were certainly common. 'That great blowsy girl!' overheard at an assembly or a hunt meeting generally meant Charlotte Bicester. But her plainness was a healthy plainness not unpleasant to the other sex,

while it undoubtedly smoothed her path with her own. In fact, and though Lady Bicester never suspected it, the good lady owed a large part of her success to her daughter's unaffected manner; for while Dr. Portnal seldom talked to the elder woman without his thoughts involuntarily flying to sugar and the slave-trade, he accepted Charlotte without demur, though naturally he thought her inferior to his daughters.

She rode with a nerve and skill not quite feminine; and often alone, to her mother's disgust. Dunch saw her one morning about this time as she passed down the narrow street, and occupied as he was in dressing a wig suspended to the door-post, he had the opportunity of appraising her points with a knowing eye. 'If she'd a face to match her figure,' he decided, 'there'd not be much amiss.' And as she drew rein to speak to him, 'You're blooming, my lady,' he said graciously.

'Whose wig is that?' Charlotte inquired, pointing to it with her whip. Wigs were going out of fashion, to Dunch's great loss. Even the Rector wore his own hair.

'Well, it's old Captain Bligh's, miss,' he said, standing back from it that he might review it the better. 'And not before it was time, though there's many a day that he don't wear it.'

'Then don't you overcharge him, Dunch,' Charlotte retorted. 'As you do me.'

Dunch grinned. 'No chance o' that,' he said, with a shake of the head that reflected on the Captain's purse or his liberality. 'He's too old a soldier. Nor, indeed, I wouldn't, miss, if I could—not now at any rate.'

'I wouldn't trust you,' Charlotte rejoined, reining in her horse. It disliked standing on the cobbles, and was inclined to fret. 'But why now, more than at other times, Dunch?'

Dunch let his hand drop. 'Haven't you heard, miss? That his son's on the street again?'

'On the street?' Charlotte gave her horse a clip with the whip. 'What do you mean? I thought that he was working at the Cove. Someone told me so—why, it was only yesterday.'

'He was, my lady, true as true. But'—the barber looked mysterious—'Budgen shifted him this three days past. And he's out now, no doubt about it!'

'Dear, dear, I'm sorry!' Charlotte exclaimed. 'I thought it so brave of him to take that work.'

'Well, he's out again, there's no doubt of that. The why I don't know, but there it is.'

'Give a dog a bad name, eh!' There was a gleam in Charlotte's eyes. 'I think it's horrid of Budgen, Dunch!'

'I suppose he knows his own business, miss. But I'm sorry myself. I never had but an easy word from the young man, and it's a come-down, there's no denying it. But work's slack at the Cove. It's may-be that.'

'No news of the *Peggy*, I suppose?'

'Not as I've heard. But she might come in at any time. And not alone, I hope. Barney Toll, he's mate on her, he lodges with me, and many a time I think of him stormy nights like.'

'I expect you've something in her, Dunch?'

Dunch shook his head. 'No, miss, not now. There's none in the town has, to my knowing. We got a fright when the *Pride* was taken. Ah, me! it was a sad business that! The old *Pride*! I saw her go out the last time as ever she went, looking that fair and gay and the bells ringing, and every soul in Beremouth on the quay, cheering and God-speeding her as you never see the like! Little we thought the Mounsires had as good as their grip on her! No, my lady, it's a ticklish game and parlous. Too many blanks and too few prizes for poor folk!'

Charlotte nodded, and moved on. She was going to the Rectory, where at this hour of the day cake and wine would be on offer in the drawing-room. As she rode at a walk up the winding road to the church she saw the old Captain in front of her stumping up the hill to the churchyard; and something in his weary air, his limping gait and shabby coat touched her. When three minutes later she entered the Rectory drawing-room, she had him on her mind, and what Charlotte had on her mind she seldom failed to make known.

'Well, I think it's a shame!' she announced as she entered the room. 'And someone should tell that old bear, Budgen, what we think of him! Mr. Fareham, you might! No, Augusta, thank you, I've not your advantages, I'll sit with my back to the light. Yes, *Peggy*, *Madeira*, please, and a very large piece of that cake!'

'You'll grow stout, Charlotte.' This from Augusta.

'Not while there are men like old Budgen about,' Charlotte retorted. 'He makes me sick!'

'Why?' Fareham asked. 'What has he done now, Miss Bicester?'

'A very dirty trick, I think. Haven't you heard?'

'We shall when you have told us,' Augusta said, smiling.

'And you really don't know?' She turned to *Peggy*. 'Don't you know?' But *Peggy* was on her feet, leaning over the cake-

tray to set something straight, and she did not answer. 'I thought that you had some feeling for the man,' Charlotte persisted, 'if Augusta had not! 'Pon honour, Augusta, I am not sure that you won't be pleased. That old Budgen has turned off Mr. Bligh!'

'No!' Fareham exclaimed. 'You don't say so? I heard that the poor beggar had gone there. But I thought that he had only just started.'

'It's easier to throw things down than to set them up,' Augusta said sagely. 'A good character is more quickly lost than——'

'Oh, don't preach, don't preach, Augusta!' Charlotte struck in. 'Or I declare I'll come and shake you. And you'—she turned on the young man—'for heaven's sake do venture to disagree with Augusta for once. Pluck up a spirit! Say you think it's a shame.'

Fareham coloured. What an uncomfortable person Charlotte could be! 'Well,' he said, 'I did think it was rather fine of the fellow—in the Service and all that, you know, to—to knuckle down to it. But——'

'But probably,' Augusta said in her matter-of-fact way, 'Budgen knows his own business best.'

'And that is all you have to say!' Charlotte retorted. 'What a bloodless creature you are, Augusta! I think Budgen ought to be torn in pieces. He's not fit to live! And if Peggy doesn't agree with me—you do think it's a shame, don't you, Peggy?'

'Yes,' Peggy said. 'I do.' The blow had been severe, for this was the first that the girl had heard of it. And she could have said so much—so much upon it! She could have surprised them all. But the consequences of speaking her mind—imprudent as she was they were ever before her eyes—were so grave that, though every nerve in her quivered with indignation, discretion carried it for once.

Her calmness, indeed, surprised her sister. 'Peggy and I,' Augusta said, 'seldom think alike.'

'I can believe it,' Charlotte retorted. 'The one feels and the other glitters—like the chandelier there that gives out pretty lights and flashes, and not a spark of heat! Yes, Augusta, I mean it. You are just like that, my dear!'

'And some people's heads are as soft as my silk,' Augusta returned, smiling indulgently. 'You've no duties, my dear, and no responsibilities, and no one looks to you for an example. But I, you see, am in my dear mother's place. I cannot be as easy as you are. I cannot think that this young man is a fitting object of sympathy, or upset myself because Budgen has got rid of him. You are not going, Peggy?'

'Yes,' Peggy said hurriedly. 'I shall be back in a minute.' She had borne as much as she could bear.

'Well, for my part,' Charlotte declared roundly, 'I know what I shall do. I shall go to Budgen and tell him what I think of him!'

'You won't!' Augusta was shocked.

'I have a good mind to! And if Mr. Fareham had the spirit of a man and wasn't in your pocket, my dear, he'd come with me and say the words I can't say! After all, Mr. Bligh's a gentleman.'

'If you think so,' Augusta said, smiling, 'you know him better than I do.'

'Well, all I know of him is from meeting him here!' Charlotte rejoined, carrying the war into the enemy's country. 'Are you coming, Mr. Fareham? No! Well, I am going. Yes, I am going. Good-bye, all!' And picking up her long skirt she sailed from the room.

'Dear Charlotte!' Augusta said with a smile, when the door had closed on her. 'She does not look at things as we do. But it is not to be expected she should, I suppose. Indeed I sometimes feel when I am listening to her that I can imagine just what her father was like—poor man!'

But a few minutes later, when Mr. Fareham had taken his leave and Augusta was left alone, her smile faded. She sat lost in thought, her face grave; and from time to time she glanced at the door as if she expected someone. Nor was she out in her reckoning. Presently she saw the handle move, and after a perceptible interval the door opened and Peggy came in. She walked to a window and stood awhile, her back to her sister. Then, 'Did you know of this?' she asked in a low voice.

But Augusta was giving all her attention to her work. 'Of what, my dear?' she asked absently.

'That Budgen had—had sent Mr. Bligh away?' Peggy's voice trembled.

'Did I know that? Yes; and'—Augusta raised her head from her work and spoke deliberately—'I am glad of it. I think it was time, Peggy.'

'Why?'

'Why do I think it was time? Because I am not blind, my dear. Nor, believe me, is your father, and I think it is quite time that you knew that and took it to heart. He chooses to go his own way about things, and he does not show his hand. But I can assure you that he knows more than you suspect.'

'Do you mean'—this time there was no doubt about the quiver in Peggy's voice—'that—that this is his doing?'

'I know nothing, but I can guess. My dear Peggy, you are like the ostrich. You stick your head in the sand and think no one sees you, because you see no one. But I have not my head in the sand,' Augusta continued calmly, 'and unless I am mistaken Sir Albery has spoken to your father and this is the result. If you are foolish he is not, and he does not intend his plans to be spoiled by silly gossip arising from your imprudence, my dear—and that is a danger of which he is fully aware. So the sooner you see things as they are and must be, the better it will be for you.'

'And he's—he's been to Budgen?' It was with difficulty Peggy could frame the words. To find that so much was known, to have the cloak that hid her secret from all eyes thus coldly and deliberately withdrawn, was a shock which almost overcame her.

'I suspect that he has, my dear,' Augusta replied, as quietly as she had spoken throughout. 'Though I have no more knowledge of that than you have. But I am sure of this. If he thinks that there is the smallest risk of your making a fool of yourself—and you may be sure that a good many besides your father know more than you suppose—he will see this young man out of Beremouth whatever it costs.'

'Whatever it costs,' Peggy repeated mechanically. Her thoughts were still astray, scattered by the shock of her sister's plain speaking.

'Well, you know him, and he is not one to fail in what he undertakes—at any rate in Beremouth. That young man will have to go, my dear. I think they will both have to go. Your father will see to that, too, I expect. He'll move them out of the Cottage. But you know him as well as I do, and you know that he is not one to make a noise. But he gets his way, Peggy.'

'Not always!' There was a new note in Peggy's voice.

'I have never known him fail,' Augusta replied, 'where he was in earnest.'

'Well, he will fail this time!' Peggy exclaimed. Surprise and dismay had given place to anger. Her voice rang with indignation.

'I think not,' Augusta replied, unmoved. 'And in a year's time, my dear, when you are Lady Wyke and reigning at Upper Bere, you will know that he was right, and thank him for it, Peggy.'

'Never! Never!' Peggy cried passionately. But she could bear no more. She could no longer control herself or her voice,

and swept by such a storm of feeling as her young life had never known, the girl hurried blindly from the room.

Oh, the meanness, the unfairness, the cruelty of it! To strike at him, to ruin him, to drive him from the place and rob him of the humble work to which he had stooped, of the pittance that he had bent himself to earn! Oh, it was vile, it was intolerable, she thought. And they had watched, spied, seen! And then, smiling at her innocence, they had struck at him whom fortune had already wounded so sorely, at him whom she held dearer than her life! For her, for her fault and because she loved him, they would punish him, they would sacrifice him, would grind him into the dust and strip him of the little that stood between him and want, of the one hope that rose between him and his weakness!

Then, if they could do this, if they had the heart to do this, what had she in common with them? Nothing, nothing, she cried passionately, as she paced her room, her breast swelling with pity and indignation. Nothing—if they could do so base, so cruel a thing, could lend themselves to so mean a revenge! They, who if they had their way, would constrain and swaddle and force her to their will! Nothing! The air they breathed choked her, the thoughts they thought were not hers, the idols they worshipped she hated! But she would be no puppet to be moved hither and thither, and bought and sold as they would! She would free herself—free herself for ever! Surely life held more than this, held things purer and higher, things real and true.

Swept by a storm of passion, not ignoble, the girl passed through a bitter hour. But the habits of a life are not to be easily put off, the ties of nature are strong, and the thoughts of the young are short thoughts. The day gave time for reflection even to Peggy, ardent and love-smitten. In the silence of her room a small voice gradually made itself heard. Her home and the affections that were bound up with it appealed to her. And it was in a more sober and a chastened mood that late that evening, when the house was quiet and dark about her, she stole softly down and listened at the door of her father's study. A light still burned within, and though this was what she expected to find—or she had not come down—she paused with her hand raised. She hung a long minute, trembling, irresolute, summoning up her courage, calling despair to her aid. For it was a great, an appalling effort that she was making, and the natural woman shrank from the ordeal. But at last she knocked.

The Rector had no liking to be interrupted save at his own

hours, and they were well known ; and it was in no inviting tone that he bade the unknown enter. But when he saw who it was, the frown passed from his brow. He sat back in his chair. ' Oh, it is you, Peggy, is it ? ' he said cheerfully. ' What is it, my dear ? It is late. I thought that you were in bed.'

Her heart beat so fast that it threatened to choke her. The moment come, she found it hard, she found it almost impossible to articulate ; and no doubt her pale, scared face betrayed her. Before her dry lips could frame a word he knew, if he had not already guessed her errand, and what she would be at ; and he had determined how he would deal with her. ' What is it ? ' he repeated blandly. ' What do you want, my dear, at this hour ? '

' It is about—about Mr. Bligh,' she stammered, forcing herself to utter the name that it cost her so much to utter. ' I—I want to say that—that if you will let him——'

The Rector cut her short. ' Mr. Bligh ? ' he said, his voice rising a note. His tone was still suave, and he still smiled at her. But he lifted his hand, and the gesture was as firm as it was pregnant. ' No ! ' he said. ' No, my dear. Mr. Bligh is not a subject or a person that I am prepared to discuss with you. It is not a question for you.'

' But—but it is,' she gasped, snatching desperately at the skirts of her courage. ' Oh, it is, sir ! It is ! I beseech you to hear me. For if—if you will let him remain, I will promise——'

He stopped her. His face was no longer either bland or pleasant. ' I have spoken,' he said. ' I have told you that I am not prepared to discuss the matter with you, and that is enough for you, and final. I will hear nothing—nothing, you understand. And I have nothing to say to you. It is late and I am busy. You will go to bed—at once, if you please.'

She made a last effort. ' But you—you don't understand ! ' she pleaded, her face colourless, her eyes imploring. ' If you will let him remain, sir, I will promise not—not to see him again, or——'

But his face was inflexible. He pointed to the door. ' No ! ' he said, and he spoke with sternness now. ' I am not foolish enough to hear what you may be foolish enough to speak. Go to bed. Go, and shut the door quietly. And pray, pray, girl, before you sleep, that you may be made wiser and more obedient. And more discreet.'

She went.

(To be continued.)

REPUTATIONS : TEN YEARS AFTER.

BY CAPTAIN B. H. LIDDELL HART.

I.

HAIG OF BEMERSYDE.

THE ESSENCE OF BRITAIN.

WHEN Britain for the first time in her history waged war not with a small professional army but with the nation in arms, it was characteristic of her nature that, instead of a genius, the man called to lead her armies should be the embodiment of her normal virtues and defects. Military genius has occasionally flowered on her soil, but it has been an exotic growth. Haig, in contrast, was distilled essence of Britain. Calm, unimaginative acceptance of whatever fate may have in store, serene faith that all will come right in the end, resisting power deep-rooted in the tradition of centuries—these combine to produce that inexhaustible endurance which has ever been the despair of her foes, sapping their own will to conquer. Marvellously apt, both for Haig and for the men of whom he was the leader and type, was the family motto of the Haigs—‘Tyde what may.’

Born on June 19, 1861, at Cameronbridge, Fife, Douglas Haig sprang from a branch of the famous border Haigs of Bemersyde.

He conformed to the national tradition from the first. In his school and university days, at Clifton and at Oxford, he was known for his athletic powers and character, but not for any academic promise or achievements. From Oxford he went to the Royal Military College, Sandhurst—not direct to a commission like the present-day university entrant—and here revealed the first signs of distinction. Industry is the proverbial birthright of the Lowland Scot, and heredity may have asserted itself to give his mind a serious bent, coupled with the fact that he entered later and thus was several years older than his fellows. It is at least certain that one of his officers, in answer to an inquiry, said: ‘There is a cadet here called Douglas Haig, who is top at everything—books, drill, riding, sports and games; he is to go into the Cavalry; and what is more, he will be top of the Army before he has finished.’ He

actually passed first out of Sandhurst and was commissioned in the 7th Hussars. The Cavalry, in those days particularly, did not take soldiering too seriously, and an officer with a zest for work could be sure of receiving the grateful surrender of others' modest portion so long as he did not disturb their tranquillity. Thus, after barely three years' service, he became adjutant of his regiment, and this position, backed by his strong character, enabled him to disturb others to such good effect that the training of the 7th Hussars began to set new standards in India. He was helped by his skill at polo, for the fact that on joining he went straight into the 7th Hussars' team, then the finest in the Army, dissipated the prejudice which attaches to that unpopular species, the book-worm.

Polo, greatest of all games, is undoubtedly good training for a cavalry troop or squadron leader. But in the British Army it is more, for anyone who attends regimental dinners knows that a good polo player is *ipso facto* a good general. The reason apparently does not lie, however, in the rapidity and skill of manœuvre which it induces, for I recall an interchange of such sentiments, and compliments, between two distinguished cavalry generals, one of whom then went on to deliver the interesting if unhistorical dictum that 'a great army can only be worn down by hard fighting; it cannot be outmanœuvred.' As, under Haig, he was primarily responsible for the offensive at Ypres in 1917—hard enough in cost and result—he ought to know.

Haig's strenuous time as adjutant merely gave him a greater thirst for military experience, and he spent his subsequent leave in visits to the German Army and the French Cavalry School at Saumur, his report on which brought him to wider notice. But for a moment his career was in jeopardy through the discovery that he was colour-blind; rejected in the medical examination for the Staff College, he managed to enlist the sympathy and influence of the Duke of Cambridge, who secured his entry as an exception to the rule. Haig was fortunate, for if 'hard cases make bad law' an uncompromising insistence on red-tape regulations has lost the Army many good soldiers.

At the Staff College, prophecy from many quarters forecast for him a great career, and fortune befriended him by providing in the quick succession of the Sudan and South African campaigns not merely a chance to win his spurs, but an extended opportunity for distinction. Coming back from the Sudan in 1899, to become

brigade-major to the Cavalry Brigade under Sir John French, he naturally found a place on his staff when the South African war broke out a few months later. Soon he became Chief Staff Officer to French in the Cavalry Division, where his methodical instincts, caution, and sagacity acted as ballast to his impetuous commander. Brevet promotions came rapidly, and in the later phase of the war he became commander of a group of columns during the 'sweeping' operations. Here he did useful work, but the thoroughness and method which made him an ideal staff officer were not all-sufficient qualities in the chase of slippery bands of Boer partisans. Among many honours which the campaign had brought him was that of Extra Aide-de-Camp to the King. Although his spells of home service had been short he had won the personal regard of King Edward, and the royal interest in his career was strengthened by his marriage in 1905 to the Hon. Dorothy Vivian, one of Queen Alexandra's maids-of-honour. When this took place he was once more holding an appointment abroad, for in the autumn of 1903 he was appointed Inspector-General of Cavalry in India, at the direct request of Kitchener, then Commander-in-Chief, on whom his work in the Sudan campaign had made a lasting impression. The appointment was exceptional for one who was only a brevet-colonel, and coupled with his substantive promotion he was made temporary major-general. Next year this rank was made permanent—an amazing rise for a man of forty-two who had only entered the Army at twenty-three. He was commonly called 'Lucky' Haig, and, marked as was his ability he was the favourite of fortune not merely in his escapes from death but in the combination of circumstances which gave him such a close series of opportunities to win distinction and attract notice. That he nearly climbed to a still loftier place has been revealed by Lord Esher, who presided over the committee which recast the organisation of the Army and created the General Staff, in 1905. 'The personality of General Haig, then only 44 years old, and very junior in the Army, had so impressed itself upon the British Government that there was a wish to appoint him as Chief of the General Staff, making the appointment practically permanent, as was the custom in the German Army. But the prejudices of seniority and rank were too great, and an older officer was named.'

✓ In India, Haig's régime was like an east wind, bracing but severe. He set a hard standard both in training and conditions, conducting staff rides and exercises under conditions as near as

possible to the reality of war—as he conceived it. That he developed the efficiency of the cavalry is unquestionable. But like Foch he did not fit his theories to modern facts. Despite the experience of the South African and Russo-Japanese wars he declared himself the champion of the *arme blanche* and of shock tactics, and was so determined and sure of his opinion that he did not hesitate to remove subordinates who dared to maintain more realistic views. Basing himself on history, he was determined, rightly, that the cavalry charge had ever been the decisive instrument of the Great Captains. His failure was that he could not, or would not, realise that modern fire-arms had made the cavalry charge impossible in its traditional form and that this essential factor could only be revived by finding a substitute for the excessively vulnerable horse.

In 1906 he came home to be successively Director of Military Training and Director of Staff Duties at the War Office. Three years later he went out to India again, as Chief of the Staff, although very reluctant to take the post because of his conviction that a war with Germany was inevitable and imminent, and his wish to be on hand to take part. It was a relief to him when in 1912 he was again brought back, this time to receive the blue ribbon of home commands—the Aldershot Command. Aldershot was the main training ground of the Expeditionary Force, containing its first two divisions, and fate gave him only two years in which to prepare this force for its great test.

In 1912, as commander of an army corps, he opposed General Grierson in the army manœuvres around Cambridge, which through ill-planned direction suffered in realism. For this reason comparisons were not altogether fair, but in the military world Haig's reputation suffered a little from his being outmanœuvred. The official report on his part in the manœuvres revealed in him that same obstinacy in adhering to fixed plans without regard to the facts which was so marked a feature of his command in war. The result tended to increase the suspicion, raised in South Africa, that Haig was a better staff officer than commander, lacking strategic intuition and the instinct of surprise.

During the summer of 1914 Haig was absorbed in the intensive training of the troops at Aldershot, and was in bivouac with them south of Aldershot at the moment when Austria's ultimatum to Serbia was delivered. On the declaration of war, Haig took up his assigned position as commander of one of the two Army Corps

of the British Expeditionary Force. Grierson had the other, but dying suddenly in the train, his command was given to Smith-Dorrien, Haig's predecessor at Aldershot. In the opening clash at Mons and the subsequent retreat, Haig, on the right wing, bore a less severe strain than the II. Army Corps on the left wing, where the brunt of the German onslaught fell. And history has shown that the strain on Smith-Dorrien's Corps was partly owing to the action—or inaction—of Haig's Corps. The major responsibility, however, rested with General Headquarters, which failed to keep control of the operations and to co-ordinate the movements of the two Army Corps. This failure in turn had its source partly in the collapse of Sir John French's Chief of Staff, General Murray, who fainted at St. Quentin on the morning of August 26, the day of critical battle at Le Cateau. Worse still, he recovered sufficiently to think that he was functioning, when actually he was still unfit. Thus during critical days there was no firm hand on the helm.

The danger, as well as the subsequent difficulties, was immensely aggravated by the fact that, at the outset, the British retreat was split into two portions by the Forest of Mormal. This large and dense obstacle was so close to the starting point of the retreat that there was hardly time or space to withdraw the whole force by one flank, and Sir John French decided, on receiving an inaccurate cavalry report that there were no roads through the forest, to divide his force, leaving Haig to retire by the east side of the forest while Smith-Dorrien retired by the west.

The divergence was almost fatal, for, separating on August 24, it was not until September 1 that the two Army Corps joined up once more—there was at times a gap of 15 miles between their inner flanks—and during that interval the II. Army Corps (Smith-Dorrien) came desperately close to disaster at Le Cateau. Isolated and unaided, except for the welcome reinforcements of a fresh division, Smith-Dorrien was compelled by the closeness of the enemy and the fatigue of his own troops to stand and fight at Le Cateau on August 26, disregarding the orders for a continuance of the retreat. After the check to the German advance caused by this rearguard action, the further retirement of the Expeditionary Force was never seriously threatened. But it was fortunate for the British troops, exhausted and disordered, that the Germans were slow to begin the pursuit and then took the wrong direction in the belief that the British were retreating westwards instead of

southwards. This German delusion, held even before Le Cateau, was strengthened by the very fact that they only met resistance on the left wing, as Haig's Corps had continued its retreat while Smith-Dorrien was standing to fight. In consequence the Germans not only attacked Smith-Dorrien's front from the north—believing that it was his flank—but passed round his right and attacked his exposed flank—believing that it was his front.

Why had Haig laid bare his neighbour's flank, and why was he too far away to support him when attacked? It has long been one of the mysteries of the war. The cause lay partly in French's failure to keep touch with and control over his two corps, partly in Haig's breach of French's original orders. On the eve of Le Cateau French had ordered both corps to continue the retreat next day in a *south-westward* direction. Smith-Dorrien, as we have seen, disobeyed these orders by stopping to fight, compelled to take the decision of his own initiative because of the difficulty of communicating with French in time. Haig apparently disobeyed these orders by retiring *southwards* next day, instead of south-westwards, a course which took him hour by hour further from Smith-Dorrien. But his decision may have been inspired by verbal instructions from French who, believing that the II. Corps was doomed, was intent on saving what he could of the remainder of his force—himself driving to see Haig and sending messengers to the cavalry and horse artillery. The root cause of the trouble was that in the critical hours the Commander-in-Chief was too far away for consultation or control. French had moved his headquarters back to St. Quentin, twenty-two miles distant even from Smith-Dorrien at Bertry, and with no direct telephone communication except through the railway station there.

Liaison was indeed the weak joint of the command, not merely inside the British force but between it and the French. At the first meeting between Sir John French and General Lanrezac, commanding the French Fifth Army on his eastern flank, a mutual antipathy had sprung up—accentuated by the barrier of language—and thereafter both took their own course without consideration of each other. If Lanrezac gave the first cause for complaint, French, after Le Cateau, thought for a moment of cutting adrift from his Allies altogether, to fall back and fortify 'Torres Vedras' lines near the coast, a project from which he was only dissuaded by Henry Wilson's timely use of his inimitable powers of humour and cajolery.

This lack of liaison between the Allies throughout the retreat would have been worse but for Haig's influence. As his Corps was the material link between the two armies so he himself was the personal link, and so quickly did the French liaison officers realise this that all made a point of calling first at his headquarters on their journeys to and fro between the two greater headquarters. His direction of march, due south, on the day of Le Cateau may have been due to his desire to keep touch with the French.

Similarly, when the French Fifth Army halted their retreat on August 28, Haig sent a message to Lanrezac that his troops were perfectly fit to attack and that he wished to co-operate with the French in a counter-stroke. His willingness was overruled and reprimanded, however, by Sir John French, who, in face of the appeals of the French commanders, insisted on continuing the retreat, leaving the French to fight alone and lose the fruits of their success. Let it be said in fairness to Sir John French that, seeing only the local situation, he may have found it difficult to understand why Lanrezac had left him in the lurch at Mons.

Haig had a cooler temperament and a more balanced view, as well as a better understanding of the French mind. He maintained this spirit of helpfulness when in supreme command, and none had a better grasp of the vital importance of co-operation between the allies. If General Headquarters was sometimes as notorious for its criticisms against the French as was Grand-Quartier-Général against the British, such tendencies were due not to Haig but to his subordinates.

In the Battle of the Marne, which turned the tide of the war, the British force had an important indirect influence but its direct effect was small, owing to the fact that it had made an extra day's march to the south when its allies halted for the counter-offensive. But after the subsequent advance to the Aisne, and the check there, the British Expeditionary Force assumed a leading rôle, and was the decisive factor in thwarting the Germans' second bid for victory. The immortal resistance of Ypres was primarily a 'soldiers' battle, depending on the courage, endurance and musketry skill of the regimental officers and men, and on timely counter-attacks carried out by battalion or brigade commanders. The rôle of the Higher Command was perforce limited to their moral influence and to their efforts to cement the crumbling parts of the front by scraping reserves from other parts. Within these limits Haig proved himself an ideal defensive general. On him fell the

whole conduct of the battle. His Chief still had the delusion that he was attacking when the troops were barely holding their ground, and later, when enlightenment came, was equally insistent on retreat, only to be dissuaded by the greater will-power, and perhaps the great self-delusion of Foch, who had been given the rôle of co-ordinating the action of the allied forces around Ypres.

Haig's economic distribution of his slender strength, and his success in 'puttying up' the strained and cracking front, owed much both to his cool calculation and to the forward location of his headquarters close to the battle-front. Invaluable also was the moral influence of the calm which his bearing diffused. And on the most critical day of the struggle he revived for a moment that personal element of leadership which so often turned the scales of battle in the past, before the days of scientific killing at long range. News had just come back that the Germans had made a breach in the front at Gheluvelt, the guns were necessarily falling back, stragglers and wounded trickling down the Menin road. Up the road, moving 'at a slow trot with part of his staff behind him as at an inspection,' Haig was seen riding forward towards Hooge, and the sight did much to restore confidence.

When the German tide of attack at last ebbed, and the sorely depleted British ranks were refilled and expanded, the Expeditionary Force was divided into two armies, and Haig received command of the First. In this capacity he was in executive command of all the abortive attempts in 1915 to break through the trench-barrier. The first was at Neuve Chapelle in March. Here a heavy concentration of artillery was secretly assembled, and an intense bombardment of half-an-hour's duration delivered on the German trenches, after which the artillery lengthened their range and dropped a curtain of fire to prevent the reinforcement of the enemy's battered trenches, which were rapidly overrun by the infantry. Complete surprise was obtained and most of the first positions captured, but control broke down, reserves were late in coming up, and the opportunity of exploiting the initial success vanished. A further factor was that the narrow frontage of attack made the breach more easy for the defenders to close; this defect was unavoidable owing to the general shortage of munitions. The cost of this experiment might have been offset by the benefit of its experience. But both Haig and the Allied Command as a whole missed the true lesson, which was the surprise obtainable by a short bombardment that compensated its brevity by its intensity.

And only partially did they appreciate that the sector attacked must be sufficiently wide to prevent the defender's artillery commanding, or his reserves closing, the breach. Instead, they drew the superficial deduction that mere volume of shell-fire was the key to success. Not until late in the war did they revert to the Neuve Chapelle method, and meanwhile it was left to the Germans to turn it to profit at the expense of the Russians in the Tarnow-Gorlice break-through in May 1915.

The British offensive at Loos, in September, was a more costly failure and without any experimental value. One fault was that it was too far away from the joint French offensive in Champagne for either to react on the other, but a worse was that the British Command tried to reconcile two irreconcilable factors—they aimed at a break-through but preceded it with a prolonged bombardment which gave away all chance of surprise. But as the initial and fundamental mistake was appreciated only by a few, the brunt of the criticism fell on Sir John French, who had held the reserves too far back and handed them over to Haig too late for the brief opening success to be exploited.

The orders of both French and Haig for Neuve Chapelle had breathed a spirit of supreme optimism—Haig's beginning with the grandiloquent words: 'The Expeditionary Force will resume the offensive on March 10th,' which seemed an inflated description of an attack made by two divisions on a front of less than two miles. It is still more difficult to understand the similarly distorted perspective of the orders for Loos, which indicated far distant objectives that the British Army did not reach until the eve of the Armistice in 1918.

While making all allowance for the new problems created by trench warfare conditions—which, however, had been foreshadowed by the Russo-Japanese war and prophesied by Monsieur Bloch, a Polish banker, twenty years earlier—the historians of the future will find it difficult to understand the slowness of the Allied generals to grasp the defensive strength of barbed wire and machine-guns. They refuted the old proverb 'once bitten, twice shy,' for bite after bite failed to make them shy of prognosticating success, far less of their offensive efforts. More curious still in a generation of soldiers nurtured on military history, was their utter disregard of military history. On the one hand they disdained the principles of surprise and concentration, which have ever been the master-keys of the Great Captains, announcing their intentions to the enemy by

days of prolonged bombardment and attacking with a tiny fraction of their force while the rest remained inactive. On the other hand, while violating the principles of normal warfare, they refused to treat their operations as siege warfare. The Messines attack in 1917 was the first and almost the only British operation which was framed on a true siege warfare basis.

The aftermath of Loos saw Sir John French relieved of his command of the British Expeditionary Force, and replaced by Sir Douglas Haig. The record of his career and every outward qualification except personal magnetism marked him out for this selection. If the miscarried offensives of 1915 had brought him no credit, they had not been signalled by the appearance of any possible rival. Haig's first task was to forge the molten ore of the New Armies which was flowing out to France into an offensive weapon, and to sharpen its edge by trench experience and training behind the line. To gain the time required all his strength of character, and the strain became greater when the Germans attacked Verdun and in that long-drawn-out attrition offensive gradually bled the fighting strength of France. To release French reserves Haig relieved the French Army which was holding the sector around Arras sandwiched between the British First and Third Armies. But he refused to be hurried into a relief offensive before his forces and resources were ready. Even before Verdun was assailed he had objected to Joffre's plan for partial offensives in April and May as preparatory steps to a general Allied offensive, simultaneously with the Russians, in mid-summer. It was a pity that Haig's clear sight and sound attitude in resisting the many-sided pressure and clamour for a premature stroke in aid of the French were not maintained in the conduct of his own offensive. The original plan had been for the French to attack with forty divisions on a twenty-five-mile front south of the Somme, and the British to attack with twenty-five divisions if possible on a fourteen-mile front north of the Somme. But as the French were drained of their strength at Verdun, so did their share in the Somme plan evaporate. Ultimately their front of attack shrank to eight miles and their force to sixteen divisions, of which only five took part at the outset. Thus the main burden was shifted to the British, and remained on their shoulders for the rest of the war.

Yet Haig's aims do not seem to have been reduced in proportion to the shrinkage of his resources. True, his orders no longer

ordained the unlimited objectives of Loos nor foresaw quite so rapid a break-through as had then proved a mirage. But the ultimate objectives were as far-reaching. What possible ground was there for such ambitious dreams? The plan, while disdaining the old master-keys of concentration and surprise, made no pretence to provide any new key. The Fourth Army, which was to make the attack, had only seventeen divisions, with three more in reserve under Haig. The artillery concentration, of 1500 guns, was barely the equal of that of the Germans in May 1915 for their Tarnow-Gorlice break-through, and the defences on the Russian front a year earlier could not be compared with the German network of wire and trenches on the Somme. The Fourth Army Command made a vain protest that with the artillery available the scheme was too ambitious. Worse still, the British had not only to attack uphill against an enemy holding the high ground, but they had strengthened their own obstacle by their short-sighted policy of harassing the enemy continuously as a normal trench routine. For when the Germans held the dominating positions as well as a superiority in equipment and ammunition, these 'worrying' tactics wore down the British troops more than the enemy—attrition on the wrong side of the balance-sheet. Further, they stirred the Germans to strengthen their trench defences, to develop by art the advantages of nature, so that the British offensive came against an almost impregnable fortress instead of the relatively weak defence system which had faced the French when they held this part of the front. For the French policy, except when engaged in active operations, was 'live and let live,' and when their 'war-weariness' troubles of 1917 are recalled, it is the highest tribute to the endurance of British troops that they endured the policy of their leaders so long.

Finally, any chance of surprise was given away not only by the neglect to conceal the vast preparations, but by a seven days' long bombardment.

July 1, 1916, dawned with a promise of broiling heat, and at 7 A.M. the bombardment rose to its height. Half an hour later the infantry rose from their trenches—and thousands fell, strewing 'No Man's Land' with their bodies, before the German front trench was even reached. For their opponents were the Germans of 1916, most stubborn and skilful fighters, quick to exploit their defensive assets; while the British shells flattened their trenches, they sheltered in dug-outs or shell-holes and then, as the barrage lifted,

dragged out their machine-guns to pour an unslackening hail of bullets into the dense and rigid waves of the attackers. The Somme marked the nadir of infantry tactics, the revival of formations that were akin to those of the eighteenth century in their formalism and lack of manœuvring power. Only as the upstanding waves were broken up by the fire, and human nature, reasserting itself, formed little groups which worked forward by rushes from shell-hole to shell-hole, did advance become possible. The British losses on this terrible day were 60,000, the worst day's loss in the whole history of the British Army, although only fourteen divisions were engaged. The only credit was earned by the skill and fortitude of the German defenders and the unquenchable courage of the New Armies of Britain. All along the attacking line these quondam civilians bore a percentage of losses such as no professional army of past wars had ever been deemed capable of suffering without being broken as an effective instrument. Yet they carried on an equally bitter struggle for another five months.

For on the morrow Haig decided to pursue the attack, although at first only in the southern sector, where his troops had gained and maintained a small foothold—the French, on their flank, with slighter opposition and more flexible tactics, had penetrated rather deeper. But he fell back on a pure attrition method of petty advances, so small in scale that they could have only a tardy effect, and that chiefly on the British casualty roll. If Haig had been over-ambitious and unduly optimistic before July 1, he now tended to the other extreme.

It is a moot point whether an opportunity was missed on July 1 of exploiting the partial success in the south. The Germans were badly shaken here, and if British reserve divisions were few, theirs were fewer, as their delay in counter-attacking showed. But there is no doubt as to the opportunity offered, only to be lost, on July 14. In contrast to Haig, the Fourth Army command realised that if the attack was to be continued, bold and rapid measures were the only chance of forestalling the German reinforcements and labour which were rebuilding, in rear, their fortified front faster than the British could break it down.

The German second line, for the moment their last serious barrier, ran a little in front of the crest of the watershed between the Somme and the Ancre. To wait until the British troops had carried their line close enough for a trench assault and their flanks were secure, as Haig wished, would have given the Germans time

to confront them with a barrier almost as firm as the original of July 1. The Fourth Army command, reviving the forgotten principle of surprise, proposed a plan which, for all its risks—calculated risks—was more truly secure and economical of force. It was to cross the intervening ground under cover of darkness and assault just before daylight after a hurricane bombardment of only a few minutes' duration. In 1916 the ideas of a night advance and such a brief bombardment were alike so fresh, almost revolutionary, as to be a shock and appear a gamble to orthodox opinion. To attempt the manoeuvre with New Army troops, men who had been civilians less than two years before, made the plan seem yet more rash to those who forgot that calculated audacity is the secret of surprise, and hence of victory. Haig was strongly opposed to it, preferring a more limited alternative, but Rawlinson persevered, backed by the opinion of his Chief of Staff and the confidence of the actual troop-leaders. Unhappily, although he gained his way, the reluctance of the Commander-in-Chief caused the postponement of the attack to July 14—a delay that was to have grave consequences. For the stroke succeeded, slender as its weight, and that afternoon opportunity—and open country—stretched out its arms. The gaining of High Wood, the summit of the ridge, and a break-through were within reach. But the leading troops were weary, and the only reserves were the inevitable cavalry—easily checked by an odd machine-gun or two. Worst of all, the postponement had enabled the enemy to bring up fresh reserves, and as the German strength steadily swelled, their hold tightened—the British relaxed.

Two months of costly 'nibbling' followed before the crest of the ridge—so near and yet so far—was gained. By that time a fresh network of trenches had been woven in rear, and with the early onset of the autumn rains vanished the last dim hope of a break-through. The British losses in this inverted attrition campaign had been double the German, and the only tangible result was that, with the capture of the ridge, the British had obtained the commanding observation by which their enemy had so long profited. But, once more overruling the opinion of the executive Army Command, the Commander-in-Chief threw away this advantage by spending the next month in fighting his way down into the valley beyond, and so doomed the troops to the misery of a winter in flooded trenches. If the German resistance was also strained, it did not prevent them from withdrawing troops to crush Roumania.

To the tragedy of lost lives and lost chances was added that of lost potentialities. For on September 15 the premature use of a handful of tanks gave away the jealously guarded secret of this newly forged key to the trench deadlock, sacrificing its birthright of decisive strategic surprise for the mess of pottage of a local success. The metaphor has a satirical aptness, for military ignorance has never made a worse mess of any new weapon. The progenitors of the tank had long before sounded the warning, in a memorandum, that the secret must be preserved until masses of machines could be launched in a great surprise stroke, and that on no account should they be used in dribblets as manufactured. As Haig had expressed his agreement with this memorandum in the spring of 1916, the military historian is driven to the conclusion that the tanks were literally 'pawned for a song'—of illusory triumph over a local success. If so, the greater prize thus lost beyond recall was a heavy forfeit to pay for an attempt to redeem some fragment of the failure on the Somme. A mere fifty-nine were used in tiny detachments of two or three tanks, their drivers insufficiently trained, the infantry untaught how to co-operate with them, the rear preparations scant and mismanaged, the very machines themselves obsolescent because this early model was designed in accordance with specifications based on the trenches of 1915—it was little wonder that the majority broke down or became 'ditched.' Yet those that came into action proved such a life-saving factor and moral tonic as to reveal to discerning eyes that here was the key which, when properly used, would unlock the trench barrier. But the folly did not end with their misuse. Haig reported so dubiously upon them, and in letters expressed so low an opinion of their value, that Sir William Robertson, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff at home, hastened to cancel the programme of construction, and was only prevented by political intervention.

The story of 1916, as of 1917, is a painful indictment of the Commander-in-Chief's lack of vision and obstinate disregard of advice whose truth was borne out by the result. But it cannot be burked by the conscientious historian, even though he recognises the virtue of this very obstinacy in later crises—to which it had contributed. In Haig's physiognomy was a true index of character—the forehead, though not mean, was dominated and eclipsed by the chin. So, thought and imagination, although active within strict limits, were dominated by an unswerving determination which, when beneficial, was called tenacity, and

when harmful was called obstinacy. Haig at least was far more than a Joffre—his obstinacy was due to mental limits, not to pure ignorance, and he was never the catspaw of subtler brains. And although his determination was so strong, he was not so insensible to the human cost as some of his coadjutors whose personal resolution was less. In some measure his very defects sprang from virtues. His loyalty to old comrades and long-known subordinates made him slow to remove those who failed under the test of war and its new conditions. His lack of selfish ambition prevented him from cultivating that blend of geniality and fire which in some is natural and in others an artifice, but which is the magnetism of leadership. His remoteness, combined with his inability to argue, tended to discourage all but the most resolute subordinates from pressing contrary opinions—and physical courage is a far more common virtue than moral courage among soldiers long apprenticed to the profession of arms. Because of Haig's manner, more than his character, the very subordination which military discipline induces tended to become its own poison.

But public and political criticism had been growing in volume, and at the close of the Somme campaign Haig was lucky to escape the fate of his French colleagues, Joffre and Foch. Nevertheless, the fall in his credit had perhaps worse consequences. For the British Government, now led by Mr. Lloyd George, lacked the courage to depose him or the confidence to support him, and so lent themselves to the baneful compromise of subordinating him to the control, in operations, of the new Commander-in-Chief of the French Army—Nivelle. This violated an axiom of war, and of common sense, for a general cannot effectively direct another army while he is engrossed in the executive command of his own. Moreover, the atmosphere of distrust was a fertile breeding-ground for intrigue. Early in 1917 the French produced, at the Calais conference, a scheme for an amalgamated command, with a French Commander-in-Chief, a British Chief of Staff and a mixed headquarters staff. When this was rejected through British military opposition and the other compromise—of subordination—adopted, Nivelle's personal staff began to intrigue in London for Haig's removal. The chief wire-puller was Colonel D'Alenson, who, in the confidential post of *chef de cabinet*, stood ever at his master's elbow and wielded an irregular power far greater than that of the official heads of the French staff. Consumed with ambition and disease, conscious that his career was a race between glory and

death, this restless and able schemer urged Nivelle on to an early and supreme gamble to win the war at a stroke. All the more anxious was he to remove any impediments to the fulfilment of his design, and, regarding Haig in this category, he sought to supplement his underground attack by a series of dictatorial instructions, their tone hardly civil, to Haig in the hope that resentment might produce a crisis and Haig's resignation. In this object D'Alenson failed, and even the temporary harm he did to allied relations was minimised by Haig's own balance of mind, for if stung to complain he was not stung to retaliate, and it is one of the highest tributes to him that although sorely tried he never let his sense of injury obscure his sense of the need for co-operation between the Allies. It is a question whether a fine sense of duty should have prompted Haig to resign when he felt that he no longer possessed the confidence of his Government or his allies, and that his troops might suffer in consequence—as they did in April 1917 and March 1918. But it is beyond question that no man has shown or maintained greater self-control in face of the storms of criticism and the undercurrents of intrigue.

Nivelle's appointment caused a change and, worse still, a delay in the original plan of campaign for 1917. Before it could begin the Germans had disrupted its foundations by a strategic withdrawal from the huge Somme salient which the Allies had planned to pinch out. Straightening their front by retiring to the newly fortified 'Hindenburg' line, the Germans left their foes to follow laboriously through the intervening desert which, with immense thoroughness of destruction, they had created. By nullifying the Allies' preparations for attack, this withdrawal dislocated the initial moves in their plan, and restricted them to the sectors on the two flanks of the evacuated area. Thus they had to launch their main blows before the enemy's reserves were pinned down by pressure elsewhere.

The British struck first in the north, near Arras, on April 9. The temporary check to the supply of tanks had left a hurricane bombardment as the only means of achieving a surprise, but although Allenby, commanding the Third Army, urged such a course, the timely removal, by promotion, of his artillery adviser cleared the way for the long drawn-out method which the Higher Command preferred. Three weeks of systematic wire-cutting, followed by a five days' bombardment, gave the Germans ample warning, and the usual results followed. After sweeping over the forward

positions which their shells had razed, the attackers were brought to a stop by intact defences in rear. South of the evacuated area, the French blow in Champagne, on April 16, was equally abortive in strategic results and, because of its greater scale, a greater fiasco. The excessive hopes raised by Nivelle caused the greater reaction, and to the accompaniment of mutinies among the slaughter-weary French troops Nivelle fell from power, to be replaced by Pétain and a more cautious policy, and for the rest of the year the British bore almost the entire burden of the campaign.

With the failure of the French, any chance of a beneficial reaction on the dying British offensive at Arras vanished. But Haig decided to continue the operations in order, as he explained at a Conference of Army Commanders on April 30, to reach a 'good defensive line.' If these later attacks were modest in scale of force and objective, they were extravagant in lives. Haig's advocates have thrown the blame partly on the faulty tactics of the Third Army Command in face of the new defensive tactics of the Germans—thinly held forward positions with reserves concentrated in rear for prompt counter-attack—and partly on the unfulfilled promises of the French to continue their pressure. If there is much truth in these contentions, it is not the whole truth. For the minutes of the Conference on April 30 reveal, first, that Haig placed little reliance on the prospect of the French continuing their attacks, and, secondly, that the prolongation of the Arras offensive was based on a local object, and not dictated by that of bringing relief to the French.

After the costly failure, early in May, to reach this 'good defensive line,' Haig decided to transfer the main weight of his attack into Belgium, as he had originally intended to do at an earlier date. His loyalty to his Allies, and his sense of the common interest, inspired him to press on with this offensive policy even though French co-operation was lacking. And it is just to recognise that at this juncture the British Prime Minister, who had committed himself to the Nivelle gamble, was equally ardent to pursue the offensive, although on cooler reflection he subsequently tried in vain to check the policy which he had countenanced.

But if the ominous situation of the French Army, the crisis at sea caused by the submarine campaign, and the need to second the still possible Russian offensive, combined to justify Haig's decision in May, the situation had changed well before the attack was launched at the end of July. In war all turns on the time

factor. By July the French Army was recuperating, if still convalescent, the height of the submarine crisis was past, and the revolutionary paralysis of the Russian Army was clear. Nevertheless, Haig would not change his plans.

As a preparatory step, the Messines ridge south of Ypres had been secured by the Second Army, under Plumer, with Harington as Chief of Staff. For once, in a siege war, the attack was carried out according to engineer experience. The explosion of long-prepared mines, the discharge of a great volume of gas, the dovetailed co-operation between artillery, tanks, and infantry, were features of a meticulously organised scheme which, by its economical success, proved a model example of the true siege-warfare attack. It was, above all, due to perfect staff-work, and thus corresponded with the conditions of what was essentially a 'staff-officers' and engineers' war,' in all armies.

But in the greater operation which followed, not only the principle but the method and the choice of site were open to criticism. The axis of the attack diverged from, instead of converging on, the German main communications, so that the advance could not vitally endanger the security of the enemy's position in France. Haig was to adopt here the same *eccentric* direction of advance which a year later his advice prevented Foch and Pershing from taking. And if the advance on the Belgian coast could yield no wide strategic results, the idea that it was necessary in order to capture the German submarine bases on this coast has long since been exploded, for the main submarine campaign was conducted from German ports.

But, worst of all, the Ypres attack was doomed before it began —by its own destruction of the intricate drainage system in this part of Flanders. The British Command had persevered for over two years with the method of a prolonged preparatory bombardment, believing that quantity of shells was the key to success, and that, unlike all the Great Captains of history, they could disregard the principle of surprise. The offensive at Ypres, which was finally submerged in the swamps of Passchendaele in October, threw into stronger relief than ever before the fact that such a bombardment blocked the advance for which it was intended to pave the way—because it made the ground impassable.

The legend has been fostered that these swamps were a piece of ill-luck due to the heavy rain, a natural, and therefore unavoidable hindrance that could not be foreseen. In reality, before the

battle began a memorandum was sent to General Headquarters pointing out that if the Ypres area was destroyed by bombardment the battlefield would become a swamp. In the disregard of this warning is epitomised the cause of that disastrous failure, inevitable from the outset, for the mud was hampering operations in the very first days. But in another quarter the lesson was assimilated in three days, instead of the three months which General Headquarters took before they abandoned the hopeless struggle. On August 3 an alternative project was drawn up at Tank Corps Headquarters. Its preface contained this significant example of prevision :

‘ From a tank point of view the Third Battle of Ypres may be considered dead. To go on using tanks in the present conditions will not only lead to good machines and better personnel being thrown away, but also to a loss of moral in the infantry and tank crews through constant failure. From an infantry point of view the Third Battle of Ypres may be considered comatose. It can only be continued at colossal loss and little gain. . . .’

The alternative proposal was for a large-scale raid near Cambrai, where the rolling downland lent itself to tank movement, as a dramatic means of restoring British prestige and an economic means of keeping the Germans occupied. The basic idea was the release of a swarm of tanks without any preparatory bombardment to give warning of the blow. The proposed sector was in the area of the Third Army, now under Byng, who showed himself instantly receptive to the idea, although inclined to expand it from a raid into a definite attack. On August 6 he went to General Headquarters, saw Haig, and suggested an attack with tanks at Cambrai on September 20. The Commander-in-Chief was favourable, but his Chief of Staff, Kiggell, made strong objection on the ground that the army could not win a decisive battle in two places at once, and should rather concentrate every possible man in the Ypres area. Thus the enlarged idea postponed the raid, as the refusal to recognise the ‘writing on the wall’ at Ypres postponed the attack at Cambrai, until it was too late to gain decisive results.

This damping reception failed to extinguish the scheme, and late in October the growing hopelessness of the Ypres offensive rekindled the smouldering embers; ultimately, the Cambrai operation was fixed for November 20. But it had been transformed into a far-reaching offensive—aimed to penetrate as far as

Valenciennes—for which the British had not the resources because of the drain at Ypres. It is extremely difficult to understand what was in mind as to the future, for without reserves success could only mean the creation of an excessively deep and narrow salient, requiring many divisions to hold it.

Led by nearly 400 tanks, but followed by only six infantry divisions, the attack came as a complete surprise, and despite minor checks achieved a penetration far deeper and at less cost than any previous British offensive. But all the available troops and tanks were thrown into the first blow, and the Higher Command failed to give Byng the few reserves they possessed in time to exploit the success. And the cavalry, as always on the western front, belied Haig's unfailing faith, proving unable to carry out this rôle. Once more the British Command had failed to fit their end to their means.

The best comment on this lack of reserves was supplied by the commander of the neighbouring French Army Group, Franchet d'Espérey. A long motor ride in search of information brought him to a British headquarters at Albert. Entering, he interrogated a senior General Staff officer, flinging at him a string of questions as to the progress of the attack, its frontage, depth. Then came the final, the vital question: 'And where were your reserves?' 'Mon général, we had none.' The French commander exclaimed, 'Mon Dieu!' turned on his heel, and fled. If the excuse be that the Ypres battles had drained us of reserves—even so, there were divisions which came up too late—then it surely reflects on the choice of that swamp-like area and the failure to try earlier the method that at Cambrai unlocked the doors to decisive success.

For want of nourishment the advance died away, and on November 30 a German counter-stroke nearly turned limited success into unlimited disaster. The sole fruit of Cambrai was the lesson—applied the next year.

But since early in November the stream of German troop-trains westwards from the Russian front had been steadily swelling, and the British Command suddenly awoke from their offensive dreams to the grim reality that, with Russia out of the war, they and their French allies had to face almost the whole armed strength of Germany. The Italian disaster at Caporetto added to their depression, and their mood veered round to one of sheer defence. But their own extravagant offensive had dissipated their resources and sacrificed their credit. If British action had relieved the strain

on French resources, what was the benefit if Britain had drained her own to the verge of bankruptcy? And because of the loss of credit, reinforcements were withheld by a Government sick of spendthrift strategy, and dubious of the military change of mood.

The danger was aggravated by two further developments. Owing to the insistence of Clemenceau, the new French premier, Haig was forced to extend his line and take over more of the front from the French at the moment when his reserves were at the lowest. This meant that Gough's Fifth Army was dangerously stretched out and took over ill-prepared defences on the very sector where Ludendorff was about to strike. Secondly, Haig's innate distrust of compromises led him to take the decisive step which nullified the effort to establish a form, if an immature one, of unified control before the threatening storm broke on the allied front. The new Supreme War Council of the Allies had planned to create an inter-allied general reserve, under the control of its military Executive Committee, of which Foch was appointed chairman. Haig, however, brought this scheme tumbling to the ground by his reply, when called on by Foch to contribute his quota of seven divisions, that he could spare no troops. He preferred to rely on a working arrangement with Pétain, his French *vis-à-vis*, for mutual support. But his own almost quixotic sense of loyalty and the common interest led his judgment astray, and when the German blow fell on his own front, as he had rightly forecast, he was speedily disillusioned. Perhaps also he lacked the imagination to put himself in Pétain's shoes and to make allowance for the possibility that the French commander might have an equally fixed, if incorrect, conviction that the real attack was due on his front.

When the German attack was launched on March 21, and the Fifth Army was driven back over the old Somme battlefields, Haig found that his compact with Pétain was inadequate. French reserves were slow to come to his assistance, and after a comfortless interview with Pétain, Haig sent an urgent call to Lord Milner, the Secretary of State for War. Milner, however, was already on his way and the outcome of his intervention was the emergency Conference of allied ministers and generals at Doullens on March 26. Sinking personal pride in face of the crisis, Haig not only backed Milner's proposal that Foch should be appointed to co-ordinate the combined action of the British and French armies, but it was

on his intervention that the scope of Foch's commission was extended to the whole of the Western Front, instead of merely 'around Amiens.' No one had a more thorough appreciation of the fact that Amiens, the junction point between the allied armies, was also the joint in the allied harness, which must be covered at all costs. To no one was its security more due. But his instinct for method also taught him that a compromise which gave Foch partial responsibility was impracticable, and he voluntarily subordinated himself in order to give Foch a comprehensive responsibility. This loyal co-operation was maintained throughout the last year, and carried so far that, when in July Foch pressed for British reserves to meet the expected German blow in Champagne, Haig complied with his demands although still expecting attack on his own front, and although those previously sent had been sacrificed owing to the blunders of their French commander. And in his loyalty Haig refused the British Government's offer of intervention.

It is perhaps a little difficult to reconcile Haig's emphasis on guarding the Amiens 'joint' with his initial dispositions, wherein he placed most of his reserves in the north, and left to Gough's army not only the longest and most difficult sector to defend, but the lowest proportion of troops to hold it. The reason was probably that he anticipated, rightly, that the heavier weight of the German attack would fall on Byng's Third Army near Arras, and did not anticipate that if the Germans broke through they would penetrate so deeply or so rapidly as they did. And whereas the front in the north was unpleasantly close to the vital Channel ports, there was room on Gough's front to fall back some distance. It was only when the distance reached to a forty-miles withdrawal that the danger to Amiens became serious. Moreover, later knowledge reveals that Byng's successful resistance at Arras, combined with the extent of Gough's enforced retreat south of the Somme, tended to change radically the German plans and lured Ludendorff on to his ultimate undoing.

Throughout the crisis of the German inroads, first on the Somme and then, in April, on the Lys, Haig proved the same cool and unshakable commander as at Ypres in 1914. If, because of the greater scale of his command, his control could not be so direct as in 1914, he showed the same prudent and calculating use of his reserves to 'putty up' the crumbling parts of the front, and the moral symbol of his ride down the Menin road was reproduced in his immortal order of April 11:

'Many amongst us now are tired. To those I would say that victory will belong to the side which holds out the longest. . . . There is no other course open to us but to fight it out! Every position must be held to the last man: there must be no retirement. With our backs to the wall, and believing in the justice of our cause, each one of us must fight on to the end. . . .'

The only shadow on these noble sentiments is the reflection that if Haig had refrained earlier from butting frontally at an impassable wall his troops might not now have had their 'backs to the wall.'

In this crisis, however, he strove manfully to husband life; his timely withdrawal of his line in the Ypres salient largely nullified the German blow planned at this point, and he would have made other elastic withdrawals but for Foch's opposition. When the tide turned with the great counter-stroke on the Marne in July, Haig had an opportunity to show that in attack he had profited by his repeated hard lessons of earlier years. He had let Foch have British reserves for the Marne battle against the wishes of his staff, and now he was instantly receptive to suggestions from the Fourth Army Command, whom he had overruled so frequently in 1916. A small but ably conceived surprise operation with tanks on July 4 had revealed to Rawlinson and his Chief of Staff, Montgomery, a significant weakening in the enemy's morale and defects in his trench system. After the idea had been broached in conversation, Rawlinson submitted to Haig on July 17 a detailed scheme for a large-scale surprise attack on the Cambrai model. Haig at once approved it in preference to an attack on the Lys which Foch had proposed as one of a series of local offensives to free his lateral railway communications. Foch accepted the alternative site and placed under Haig the French First Army under Debeney, to extend the front of attack on the south. Rawlinson's army was secretly doubled, and by skilful precautions the enemy were kept in the dark until, on August 8, the surprise attack was launched—led by 450 tanks. Great as a material success, it was still greater as a moral, for it so convinced Ludendorff of the final tilting of the scales that he informed the Kaiser that peace ought to be sought without delay.

On August 10—when the advance was slowing down, but a new attack by Humbert's army was beginning on Debeney's right—Foch issued orders to Haig for Rawlinson and Debeney to continue their attack while Byng's army was to prepare to strike in on Rawlinson's left. Haig, now imbued with the principle of economising life, objected to an immediate continuation of Rawlinson's

direct advance against stiffening resistance, but agreed to launch Byng and proposed also to throw in the right of Horne's First Army, lying next to Byng. After a tussle of wills, Foch gave way. On August 17 Mangin's army struck, south of Humbert; on August 21 Byng advanced, on the 26th Horne, and on the same day Rawlinson began to move forward again. The difference of opinion and its effects between Haig and Foch can be, and have been, exaggerated. For although marked credit is due to Haig for modifying Foch's method, towards economy of life, it is clear that the basic plan of alternate 'shouldering' advances in rapid succession—the keynote of this new strategy—had already been created by Foch. As a result the whole German front, Soissons to Arras, was in a state of flux, the Germans evacuating under pressure the areas captured in the spring, and falling back on the Hindenburg line. Could they stand fast here?—that was the vital problem. And in solving it Haig's influence was more important than in the earlier question. Method and determination, his permanent assets, were now his valuable contributions to the allied stock. Further, it is beyond question, if natural, that he had a more correct appreciation of the German decline than the Government at home. At the end of August they sent Haig a cipher telegram expressing their anxiety if further heavy losses were to be incurred in attacking the Hindenburg line. It is absurd, as some have done, to blame them, for not only had the soldiers given the statesmen just cause for anxiety in the past but, as armed forces are based on the strength of the nation in rear, strategy must necessarily be the servant of policy. At the same time it is just to recognise the moral courage which Haig showed in accepting responsibility for the attack and staking his reputation on his opinion.

Foch, who had now freed his lateral railways, was able to turn to wider aims and produced his plan for a combined general offensive. A compound British, French, and Belgian force was to attack on the left wing in Flanders; the main British force was to break the Hindenburg Line and advance towards Maubeuge, so threatening to cut the western end of the Germans' main lateral railway and their line of retreat west of the hilly forest region of the Ardennes; the French were to advance against the German centre in Champagne, the Americans to strike towards the Briey coalfields, just west of Metz, and the eastern end of the German lateral railway. If rapidly successful, this last stroke promised decisive results in cutting the German line of retreat east of the Ardennes and turning the possible

German line of resistance along the French frontier. But it diverged from the direction of the other attacks, and so would not have the same reaction upon them as a converging advance. Haig, more prudent, urged Foch to alter this into a converging advance towards Mézières, and Foch agreed to the change.

Here again, although ardent partisans have exploited the modification to exalt Haig and depreciate Foch, the effect can be exaggerated. For, in the first place, the British broke through the renowned defences of the Hindenburg Line without the Mézières attack drawing off any material fraction of the German resistance which faced them. At the outset of this battle there were 57 German divisions opposing 40 British and 2 American divisions on the Hindenburg Line. For the Mézières advance there were 31 French and 13 larger strength American divisions—a total equivalent of at least 60 normal Ally divisions—against 20 enemy divisions.

Secondly, after breaking through the German defences the Allies' converging advance lost impetus owing to the difficulty of supply over the destroyed areas, and by the date of the Armistice all hope had vanished of cutting off the main German forces. And when the curtain fell on the long drama of the Western Front, Foch was about to launch, although a little farther east, the Franco-American turning manœuvre which he had originally intended for September, and which was now the only chance of retrieving the hope of a decisive military victory.

It is right to put forward these facts to restore a balanced view, but they in no way depreciate the real services which Haig rendered in his own sphere by directing the vital operations which, by breaking the Hindenburg Line, hastened the German decision to capitulate.

As in an earlier phase his virtue of loyalty had the effect of a vice, so in the last phase his vice of obstinacy became a virtue. Like Foch he had profited by experience, and like Foch also his profit was greatly increased because in the last phase—when the balance of numbers and morale turned definitely in his favour—the conditions at last came to fit his theories even more than his theories moved to meet the conditions.

He was different from Foch in that while Foch stands out in relief from the background of war, vital in interest as a man apart from his association with great events, Haig is engraved in the face of the war, and because of inherent self-effacement his career must be traced through the course of events.

As an executive commander there has never been a finer defensive general; in contrast, as an offensive general there has perhaps never been a worse one among those who have earned fame. In the last phase he did much to regild his reputation, but the scope for more than method and determination was not wide. His mind was dominated by the instinct of method, a valuable asset; where he failed was in the instinct of surprise, in its widest sense—originality of conception, fertility of resource, receptivity to ideas. And without the instinct of surprise—the key to economic and decisive success in war—no man can take rank among the Great Captains. But as a great gentleman, also in the widest sense, and as a pattern of noble character, Haig will stand out in the roll of history, *chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*, more spotless by far than most of Britain's national heroes. Most of all, perhaps, because in his qualities and defects he was the very embodiment of the national character and the army tradition.

*AFFECK AND SENI.**AN EARLY NIGERIAN YARN.*

BY SELIM.

It happened nearly thirty years ago about forty miles from Onitsha, on the south bank of the Niger. I will call the tribe—or rather tribelet—the Seni, though that is not their real name. Word had come through that those grim and murderous warriors the Eku Mekus (the silent ones) were meditating something unusually unpleasant even for them, and it was believed likely that they would advance as far as Asaba and raid it. Asaba is on the north bank of the Niger, about five or six miles from Onitsha, and as it was near the end of the dry season, the river bed was almost dry except for one broad shallow channel; if, then, the Eku Mekus did raid Asaba, it was more than likely that they would attack Onitsha also.

The D.C. (District Commissioner) who sent this warning was an exceptionally efficient man, and he was not at all likely to send such a message without good cause; moreover, it behoved us to take no chances where the Eku Mekus were concerned—you never knew what they were going to do till they did it. There were no troops at Onitsha at the time, but there were detachments at various places down the river, so messengers were sent off post haste to call them up—there was no telegraph then—and such arrangements for defence as were possible were put in hand at once.

There were three or four Europeans at Asaba, including two French priests at the R.C. Mission, and these were all warned, and advised to cross over to Onitsha at once. By the way, one of these priests, a dear little chap whom everyone liked, was asked if he would take part in the defence if required, as there would probably be two or three white women—missionaries—to be protected. The Frenchman in him got the better of his priesthood, and he consented with enthusiasm; then his face fell, and in a most dejected tone he said ‘*Mais non, c’est impossible; I have ze courage*’ (pronounced French fashion)—‘*I have ze courage, but I have not ze gun,*’ which saying was for many months afterwards a catch phrase on the coast.

However, neither 'ze courage' nor 'ze gun' was wanted, for the troops reached Onitsha before the Eku Mekus, or else the latter thought better of their projected raid, and this explains how there came to be a great concentration of troops at Onitsha. When I say 'a great concentration of troops' I suppose that many who took part in the Great War will picture to themselves brigade after brigade, and army corps after army corps stretching away to the farthest horizon; as a matter of fact we had collected at Onitsha nearly two hundred Hausa infantry and no fewer than four Maxims, and that for us was indeed a great concentration of troops. It was deemed advisable to keep them there for a time till all likelihood of an Eku Meku rising had passed, and as there was an excellent site for a rifle-range right at hand, it was decided to put the men through their annual musketry course. The Maxim men too had just had some new gadget served out to them—a new tripod mounting as far as I remember—and they also started on a course of instruction.

It was just at this time that the Seni for some mad reason or other determined to go on the warpath; they would have had no earthly chance at any time, but with such a force as we had in hand then it was sheer lunacy. That was so often the way out there in the old days—a tribelet would start a little war all by itself, apparently just when it came into its little head to do so, with no thought of the consequences, and not in the least deterred by anything which may have happened to a neighbouring tribe. There was no attempt at combination, and the tribes could not and would not act together, fortunately for us; each little kinglet of each little tribelet was a law unto himself, and each little tribelet was generally on bad terms with its neighbours.

The reason of this was, I think, that these tribelets were probably originally of many different races; they certainly differed widely in manners and customs and very frequently in language also. At the government school at Bonny when I was last there the boys spoke between them thirteen or fourteen quite different languages, and at the Hope Waddell (Presbyterian) School at Old Calabar the number was over twenty. There must have been throughout Southern Nigeria well over thirty different languages spoken.

In this case a District Commissioner had been on a tour, and while returning through the Seni country he had been subjected to a desultory fire from hidden foes throughout a long day's march. Why, heaven knows: he was a good man, well liked, and the Seni

had never made the least complaint; it was the Ju Ju men again I suppose. Fortunately for the D.C. his escort of sixteen native policemen behaved really well, and so he got through without a scratch and with only five or six men wounded.

There was no doubt that an expedition would have to be sent to the Seni country, and the question was whether the whole force then available should be sent or only a part of it—half would have been more than sufficient. A senior official who knew the Seni well, and whom I will call the 'Commissioner,' had by this time arrived on the scene, and he was strongly of opinion that the whole force should be sent.

'I ought to know them by this time,' he said. 'If you send a small force they will resist, and there will be casualties on both sides—especially theirs. I don't want to kill any of the poor blighters, and I don't want any of our own men killed either. If you send a strong force there will be no fighting, they will submit at once.'

And as a general rule he was right; whenever a strong force was sent against any of these tribelets there was little or no fighting, but unfortunately we could not often send a strong force. On this point and on the conduct of the expedition there was afterwards a very acrimonious controversy and a good deal of mutual recrimination, into which I do not mean to enter; the senior officer with the troops (one of the very best) did not want the whole force to go; he did not want to go himself.

'It is a junior man's job,' said he. 'I have had my chance and made the most of it. I want my juniors to have their chances too.'

However it was eventually decided that the whole force should go, and carriers and stores were got together with all speed.

The Seni country, which was nearly all dense bush, could be reached in three days' march; but it was decided to divide it into four, and about noon of the third day the Hausas were about eight or ten miles from the Seni borders and halted for the day. They had passed through one belt of bush, but where they bivouacked was fairly open ground dotted here and there with clumps of trees.

And here arose another subject of controversy. It was practically unknown for a tribe to advance beyond its own borders, they kept strictly to their own country. We had made up our minds that if there was to be any fighting—and no one believed there would be any—it would be bush fighting in the Seni country; the

possibility that the Seni would attack us before we got there (and in another tribe's country) never entered anyone's head. Consequently, although piquets had been thrown out and the country ahead to a certain extent reconnoitred, the piquets were very small and the reconnaissance had not been pushed far enough.

There was a small hill five or six hundred yards to the right front of the camp, with a clump of trees on it but open ground round it, and to this hill in the afternoon, with the O.C.'s leave, the sub. in charge of the Maxims took them for a little final instruction. It must be remembered that everything had to be carried on the men's heads; there were no horses or mules or any other transport animals and no wheeled vehicles of any kind; Maxims, tripods, ammunition, everything, had to be 'headed.'

The sub. had got everything 'assembled' and in working order, and was explaining something or other, when firing broke out seven or eight hundred yards away, and he saw our weak piquet falling back—'Bolting for all they were worth,' he said—with a mob of the Seni chasing them and firing their 'bundooks' (long flint-lock guns) as they ran. Theoretically he should at once have fallen back on the main column, but practically he could do nothing of the sort, as he clearly proved afterwards. By the time he had 'packed up' the enemy would have been upon him, and even if he had got started, what chance would his men have had, since many of them would have been carrying fifty pounds weight on their heads, while the enemy had only their bundooks and knives to carry? He stood fast and signalled to the camp—though the firing had given the alarm—that he expected to be attacked immediately, and made ready.

The Seni seeing only a few men on the hillock, and knowing nothing of Maxims, stopped their pursuit of the piquet, swerved a little to their left, and started to rush the position. The wind was blowing from right to left, so the sub. took his stand a few yards to the right to 'observe,' and when the Seni were about three hundred yards off he gave the order to open fire.

The devastating effect of machine-gun fire is so well known now that there is no need for me to describe what happened. Let anyone imagine a mob of eight hundred or a thousand men, three hundred yards from four machine guns in full blast. The sub. was so horrified at what he 'observed' that in a few seconds he rushed back to the guns, and, entirely forgetting the drill book, shouted out 'Shut up, you chaps! Stop it! Stop it!' The infantry

came up in two or three minutes, but they did not have to fire a shot; all they had to do was to round up a few hundred terrified prisoners. The Maxims had been in action for, at the most, thirty seconds.

Three days later the column moved on and entered the Seni country, but they met with no opposition whatever. They spent the next fortnight searching high and low for the king, but for a very good reason they could not find him anywhere, nor could they get any information as to his whereabouts.

I don't think I have ever seen men more upset than were those who took part in this affair. The men we had out there then were humane men, and in all our little wars their aim was to attain the desired end with as little bloodshed as possible, and it is remarkable how successful in this they were as a rule. There were exceptional cases, of course, such as the punishment of the tribe who murdered Scott; but that case was altogether exceptional, the murder and the tortures which preceded it were so diabolical, and the acts of savagery committed during the fighting were so abominable, that it was little wonder the Hausas got out of hand at the end. (His name was not Scott; I suppress the real name because it was deemed more merciful to tell his relatives that he died of fever; he was a Scot, and a very fine one, and he bore—worthily—an old and historic name.)

In the case of the Seni it had been hoped—and confidently expected—that there would be no bloodshed at all, and that matters should have turned out as they had was very greatly deplored; and by no one more than the Commissioner. He was furiously angry too. Remember that it was he who had insisted that the whole force should be sent; remember too that he had lived among this people and had grown to like them.

'I only did it to prevent bloodshed,' he said; 'but no one at home will believe it. It will be said that I deliberately assembled a strong force for the sole purpose of massacring these poor beggars.'

However, what was done could not be undone, and one problem facing the Commissioner was what to do with the six hundred or so unwounded prisoners in our hands. They were not of the best type of native, though by no means of the lowest; but they were then very badly frightened and probably expecting to be subjected to those tortures which they themselves would have inflicted on any enemies in their power. In fact when one of our native court clerks playfully attempted with a pair of barber's clippers to cut

the hair of one of them (it was all frizzed out like a mop) the man yelled at the top of his voice, thinking that the tortures had commenced, and most of the others yelled in sympathy. The clerk dropped the clippers and fled.

'We don't want this unsavoury mob hanging round here,' said the Commissioner. 'Better send the poor blighters home at once.'

'We can hardly do that, sir,' said the D.C. 'Until we catch their king and arrange terms they are prisoners of war.'

'Well, what is it?' said the Commissioner. 'I can see that you have got some unholy scheme in your mind.'

'That road from M—— to K——, sir,' said the D.C. 'I never could get the money to make it, and it would be extremely useful in opening up that part of the district. These men could do the job in three weeks or less.'

'That's all very well,' said the Commissioner, 'but how are you going to pay for it? Your vote is nearly exhausted, I know; how are you going to pay and feed six hundred men?'

'I did not propose to pay them,' said the D.C. 'They are prisoners; but I think I could manage to feed them.'

'I certainly shan't allow the poor beggars to work for nothing,' replied the Commissioner. 'But I daresay I can squeeze a little out of 'savings' to pay them if you can feed them.'

And so it was arranged. In those days if we wanted labour we had to apply to the nearest chief; he supplied the men and we fed them. At the end of the job we paid the chief—not the men—ninepence per head per day. In theory the chief gave half of this to the men and kept the other half for tribal use. In practice the chief paid the men what he liked, and they sometimes got nothing at all, though in most tribes the men got their half and sometimes more. So these Seni prisoners were told that if they worked well they would be paid fourpence a day, which we afterwards learnt was a penny more than they would have had from their king.

'Making a road' at that time was usually a very simple job; there was no wheeled transport of any kind in the country and no transport animals, so the road had to carry pedestrian traffic only. From M—— to K—— (about seventeen miles) there were no hills or valleys or rivers; all that had to be done therefore was to cut an opening through the bush about six yards wide, and roughly level the ground. An A.D.C. (Assistant District Commissioner)—a very remarkable man—was detailed to carry this job through, and the Commissioner asked him what escort he wanted.

The A.D.C. looked the mob over and grinned.

'I don't want any escort with that lot, sir,' he said. 'Give me half a dozen police or native court clerks who can speak their language and I'll manage them all right.'

Everyone knows that there are men who have naturally what is called 'a way with horses' and that these men can control with ease animals which no one else can approach. In the same way, I believe—or rather I know—that some men have naturally 'a way with natives.' Such men are very rare, and their price should be above rubies. This A.D.C. was one of these rare men and easily the best I have ever met; he could do anything he liked with natives; wherever he went he won their confidence, and generally I believe their affection also. He departed into the bush with his mob, furnished with felling axes, machetes, picks and shovels.

All went well for about a fortnight, by which time the road was roughly opened up for ten miles or so, and then another complication arose. The greater part of the road from M—— to K—— passed through the country of a tribe, hitherto friendly, whom I will call the Affecks, and the chief or 'king' of this tribe a few months before had agreed to this road being made. Perhaps the D.C. ought to have held another palaver over the business before starting work, but he was overwhelmed with work and worry at the time and he forgot, or, harassed as he was, decided to ignore, the fact that Affeck and Seni were hereditary enemies. He had simply sent a polite message to the Affeck king saying that he was about to start making the road as agreed.

The king did not like this at all, but instead of coming to see the D.C. or sending him a message, he remained quiet and brooded over what he thought were his wrongs till he worked himself up into a rage. In agreeing to the road he had expected that it would be made by his own people, that he would receive payment for it, and that he would probably have had the contract for feeding the men as well. Altogether he had reckoned on making a very good thing out of it, and he was naturally very irate indeed at the prospect of getting nothing at all.

One evening, just before his gangs stopped work for the day, the A.D.C. had returned a little way down the new road to his tent, when a small body of Affecks headed by their king suddenly broke out from the bush and carried him off—he was almost alone and quite unarmed at the time. He was bound and carried to a bush village about three miles off; there he was tied up to a post

in a hut and left strongly guarded all night. All through the evening and far into the night he could hear a heated discussion going on, and he knew that it was his fate that was being decided. Of hope he could have had none; he knew that all the troops available were in the Seni country, separated from him by thirty or forty miles of difficult country; he knew all about Scott—and others—and now he was faced with the practical certainty of a similar fate. He was a brave man, but he must have passed a horrible night; he never spoke of it afterwards, but I know that the horror of it remained with him till his death.

But again the totally unexpected happened. Just before dawn there was a sudden and furious outbreak of yells, and the Seni prisoners, armed with axes, machetes, and picks, rushed the village; well was it for that A.D.C. that he had a way with natives!

The Affecks had never dreamed of such a thing as this; they had felt certain that as soon as the A.D.C. disappeared the Seni would make tracks for their own country; they knew that our troops were there too, and they felt absolutely secure; they had posted no guards (except round the hut where the A.D.C. was confined), and they were nearly all fast asleep. The party which had carried off the A.D.C. had consisted only of the king's small body-guard and the men of this one village, and the Seni cleared that village in about five minutes. They set the A.D.C. free, and they collected over a hundred bundooks which the fugitives had left behind them in their headlong flight, with a good supply of powder; and thus became a fairly strong force.

It then transpired, very much to the amazement of the A.D.C., that the Seni king was actually one of the prisoners; no one on our side had recognised him, and of course his own men would not give him away. He it was who had organised the attack on the village; he hated all Affecks, especially their king; he had discovered the smallness of the Affeck force, and he seems to have taken a liking to the A.D.C., as most natives did.

The situation then was about as topsy-turvy as it could possibly be; the A.D.C. found himself in command of a strong Seni force with the King of the Seni acting as a sort of second-in-command. Thirty or forty miles away a strong force of ours was waging war (of a sort) on the Seni, with the avowed object of taking that same king prisoner.

Finding a quantity of yams in the village, and having ascertained that there was a fair quantity of water in the water-hole

adjoining it, the A.D.C. determined to stay where he was. He did what he could to put the place in a state of defence and sat tight.

He remained there all that day and the next, but on the third day the Affeck king came to his senses. He knew that fugitive court clerks had reached the Commissioner, and that messengers had been sent hot foot to the troops in the Seni country; his capture of the A.D.C. had been an entirely unpremeditated act, carried out in a sudden access of fury; he had made no preparation for war; he had not even called his fighting men together, and he knew that the Hausas would be upon him before he could do so; he therefore did what he should have done a fortnight before, sent messengers to ask for a palaver.

That was the end of it; the road was finished under a guard of Hausas, though they were hardly wanted then. When the work was done the Seni were sent home, each with 15s. in his possession—a larger sum than most of them had ever seen before. (Where the Commissioner got the money from, goodness only knows—we were very poor then.) Peace was made with Affeck and Seni; the king of the former was fined and required to give hostages; the king of the latter was only required to promise that he would not in future pot at Europeans passing peacefully through his country. Except for the unfortunate affair of the Maxims no life had been lost on either side through all this, though some of the Affecks had received ugly wounds at the clearing of the village.

I do not think that any report of this affair ever reached home; I never saw the official report, but I am afraid that it was—let us say—‘inaccurate.’ The truth was known to very few, and of these I believe that I can say—and with sorrow I say it—‘And I, even I only, am left.’

NISI DOMINUS.

THERE is nowadays an increasing demand that ghost stories should claim to be true and based on exact evidence and authentic details ; presumably, their readers believe them and hope to draw from them useful deductions as to their prospects in the future life ; or it may be that they are merely scientific investigators in search of truth. But whatever their aims, I have never done anything to satisfy them. To me a ghost story is, and always will be, merely a ghost story, admittedly a page from the history of the marvellous, and not to be criticised by the principles of authentic evidence.

This is said by way of preface to the following tale, the events of which took place many centuries ago and for which my principal source is a book which I see little reason for believing, or rather, I see very strong grounds for disbelieving : indeed it has been a task of considerable difficulty to infuse into its dry bones anything approaching a human interest. My readers must forgive me if I have not succeeded.

A laudable desire to spare them details of dubious and obscure learning, together with a less excusable preference for my own adventures, leads me from this volume to describing how I first came to hear of the legend of St. Philippe du Rhône.

It was during a short holiday in 1923 that I happened to be travelling in one of the slowest even of Provençal trains not far from Arles, in a compartment occupied only by myself and an unusually well-informed French abbé. A ruined chapel upon a hill in this part of the world naturally suggested Alphonse Daudet's three hundred year long Christmas party and from that we drifted to the discussion of similar legends, of Frederick Barbarossa in his enchanted cavern, of the Seven Sleepers, the Wandering Jew, King Charles' hunt, and the supposedly miraculous Comte de Saint-Germain. If I remember right, the only one concerning particularly the South of France was that of the Chapel of St. Philippe, which is apparently somewhere near Valence, and the abbé had largely forgotten that. In fact, he only remembered certain picturesque details, 'the Bishop who had no cross or ring,' 'the young man with one ear,' 'the Greek mathematician with his curious instruments,' and so forth, . . . but he fortunately

remembered and told me the name of the mediaeval writer in whose pages the original story was to be found.

On my return to London, therefore, I sought out the 'Rerum Antiquarum Novarumque' of Dionysius Rhodius, as this fifteenth-century abbot of St. Gilles chose pedantically to style himself, and discovered it, a great discoloured vellum book, in that largest, dustiest and most learned of all librarians' sections, 'Later Latin,' in which barbarous liturgies of Merovingian times and elegant Ciceronians of Florence alike remain unread for centuries. Who 'the Christians' of the original story were and from what 'barbarians' they were flying does not concern us, though various considerations lead me to place the story in the second decade of the fifth century.

. . . At any rate, the few survivors from the village were clustered half-way up the hill, where the olive trees afforded them some temporary concealment, looking down upon the burning houses below. Their costume I imagine as that we see represented on late Roman tombstones, even the Bishop undistinguished from the rest except by the cross, which he wore around his neck, and the large ring upon his hand. To him in particular the rest turned for assistance, for vain was certainly the help of man. With him was the deacon, carrying the few poor things he had been able to save from the little treasury of the ruined church. These two were resigned to death but by no means desperate of help: very different was the case of Lavinia; her parents had been massacred before her eyes, her lover probably drowned in the Rhone, and she herself merely sat upon the ground and sobbed hysterically. Paulus, the village blacksmith, and his wife, two fat genial Gauls, tried in vain to comfort her. Etheric was principally occupied in resting. The party of barbarians with whom he had come in contact had been what we moderns would call 'sportsmen,' and had given him fifty yards clear start before aiming at him. Even so he had only escaped literally by inches; a large stone had cut his left ear right off, while an arrow had pierced his leg, but fortunately not so as to prevent his running. Etheric was a typical 'Roman' of the fifth century: half a German and half a Thracian, he had all the strength of a savage, and wounds did not trouble him very much.

And last, but by no means least, there was Paris the mathematician. In circumstances like this everyone had to be an ally to his neighbour, but in better days Paris had been cold-shouldered by the village; most people agreed that he was really a heathen

or at least an Arian; many said he must be a magician, for the Dark Ages had already begun, 'and those who passed their time measuring the earth could have no thoughts for the things of heaven'; some hated him for being a Greek, others because he was rich (for that village), while the conclusion that he was mad was universally accepted. But now at last there came an uneasy feeling that after all there might be some method in his madness. That method had not deserted him, for he carried his instruments and nothing else and continued calculating and disputing as though indifferent to danger. Presumably the old man, like Archimedes at the siege of Syracuse, was determined that nothing should interrupt the faultless logic of a mathematical problem, unless indeed my learned author invented the whole prolix argument, acting on that strange convention of mediæval romances by which paladins are made to hold metaphysical discussions in the middle of battles.

There he sat upon the ground, his instruments around him, and on the flat pavement, which had once been the courtyard of a now desecrated temple, with apparent unconcern he set about describing a prodigious figure, demonstrating his construction as he proceeded to the most heedless audience an expert geometrician ever had to face.

'See here'—he drew a line—'in the supposed world of physical science, a line cannot enclose a space, for we say a line is of one dimension and a surface is of two dimensions, and one is not two. Thus again save by perspective, which is mere appearance, on a surface we cannot produce a thing of three dimensions nor on a cube one of four. But if,' he went on, with a sneer, 'as the Christians say, three can be one, if number like time is only relative, on a surface of two we may construct a figure of three, or of four, or for that matter, though it is hard to comprehend it, one of five or even of six dimensions.'

'Oh, to what object is all this?' said the poor deacon. In the hurry of the escape he had managed to keep up his courage, but this waiting for the pursuit was an agony to him and he clung to the Bishop for support.

'What object?' asked the sage bitterly. 'For five and twenty years, with no hope of reward, I have studied the constitution of the world, and the kindest word that I have had has been sympathy with my madness. Now, at last, I have discovered the eternal secret; and the very day on which I discover it, I am driven from my home by the barbarian, if more barbarous he is than my own

compatriots. But that, you will say, was to be expected. This is what happens to the learned in all times and places. But is not this more strange, that on the self-same day, those who have spurned me, those who have mocked my researches, have come to me for help—though it is well known that it is the *ἐργον* of the mathematician to be learned, and not to be helpful? This is the very irony of fate, the irony that holds rule in heaven, and not the gods—not the gods of the Romans nor the gods of the Christians either.’

‘Forgive us,’ said the deacon, ‘forgive us our unkindness to you. Only show us a way of escape.’

‘No,’ said the Bishop, ‘there are things more precious than life.’ He spurned an instrument that lay near his foot. ‘By such means I will not escape.’

‘I care nothing for life,’ said Paris. ‘I am indifferent whether you escape. But you may make the experiment if you care to try, and see if my construction is at fault. Soon the bridge will be built, and you may step across.’

‘Yes, yes,’ said the deacon, ‘should we not make use of every means God offers? Did you not say, martyrdom is one thing; suicide is another. Did you not say we should use all human means of escape and not wait for a divine miracle? Did you not say so, sir? Was not the passage through which we fled a human device?’

‘Is that thing human?’ said the Bishop sternly. ‘To what kingdom does that belong?’ and he pointed at what my author quaintly calls the ‘pentacle’ upon the ground. ‘Shall I save my flock on earth, to lead them to Hell? Remember Innocent, Bishop of Rome.’

‘Science is human,’ replied the sage bitterly, ‘as human as ignorance or stupidity. There is no magic. The world is rational.’

‘The world is a shadow,’ said the Bishop, ‘so soon passes it away and we are gone. Nothing we see on this earth exists.’

‘You are right,’ said the sage, ‘though right by accident. The things we see do not exist. Matter is non-existent. Time and space are subjective.’

‘Make haste,’ shouted Etheric, ‘I hear horses galloping on the road.’

‘Haste,’ said Paris, ‘that is a word that does not mean much to one who understands the relativity of time’—yet by ever so little he seemed to increase the speed of his construction, though

abating none of his accuracy. Then for one moment he stopped to consider. 'What would be the difference,' he asked, 'between escaping from time and remaining in the same space while the temporal series continued, and escaping from the dimensions of space but still forming part of time?'

'What does it all mean?' asked Paulus, only at this point beginning to show real signs of alarm, for he was a brave man.

'What indeed?' said the mathematician, 'for I think both propositions are meaningless.' He continued his construction. 'The line PR is tangent to a parabola, which of course extends in both directions to infinity.'

'Eternal damnation,' muttered the pious Bishop.

'Suppose a point whose *locus* is that parabola, and let the point Q be moving upon the diameter of the circle RS at an infinite speed——' The remainder of the hypothesis was drowned in the terrified shrieks of Lavinia, as the horses' hoofs became audible to all. But Paris had at last completed his figure as he drew the last line. 'Learning can understand and step beyond time and space,' he cried. 'Only cross that figure.'

'Hurry, hurry, reverend sir,' cried the smith. 'I see spears glittering in the trees.'

'Nothing shall make me cross that circle,' said the Bishop firmly.

Round the bend in the road now came pursuers and pursued. The horses were tired with the ascent of the hill, and not gaining rapidly on the man in front of them. Everyone recognised him. He was Timotheus, Lavinia's betrothed lover. 'Let us die together,' he shouted.

'You may escape if you prefer it,' cried the old Greek in a voice like thunder, and he stood up, his eyes gleaming and his back no longer bent. The problem he had set himself was solved, and for the first time in his life he felt completely master of the situation, master over ignorance and bigotry and violence. He pointed to his circles.

'Step across there, you will escape.'

Everyone waited for the Bishop. He looked at Lavinia clasped in Timotheus' arms, then he stepped lightly across. As he did so, his golden cross and ring fell with a resounding clang upon the pavement.

The two lovers followed him, then Paris, then Etheric and the deacon and the smith's wife, and Paulus was so slow that one of

the Gothic horsemen almost pierced his heel with a spear as he leapt across.

But Paris did not misjudge his time by a moment: quick as lightning, he drew his staff along the ground and broke the magic circle.

The barbarians passed them by like a gust of wind, and left no more impression on them. Long before they had ceased galloping about the hill in a fruitless search after their victims, the Bishop and the deacon, forgetting everything else, had settled down to search for the vanished cross and ring, while Paris, as unperturbed as ever, was sitting upon the ground, commencing a still more complicated figure.

And so they escaped death in this invasion, and so they escaped during the invasion of the Vandals, and in all the wars which afflicted that unhappy land for centuries. For the construction, which should have brought them inside space and time again, even Paris was never able to discover, 'for' says the pious Abbot of St. Gilles, 'to do is easier than to undo, and to go is easier than to return, even to learn is easier than to forget; and without the holy cross of what avail are all the lines and angles of the learned?'

And thus even when the Chapel of St. Philip had been built upon that spot, where its ruins are to-day, half-way up the hill above the Rhone, still, when any disaster hung over Christendom, they might be seen—the Bishop walking up and down and around the church trying to find his sacred ornaments and the deacon following him with his purse. And Lavinia and Timotheus would look impatiently on, still holding each other's hands, as though their wedding could not be celebrated till the Bishop found his cross and ring, while the other three lay wearily upon the floor.

So, the worthy abbot claims that his sacristan saw them, in the year he wrote, 1453, on St. George's Eve, exactly as I have described them. And as for Paris, the mathematician, the whole floor of the Chapel was covered with his figures, and all the lower part of the walls and the pillars and the door. And he himself sat on the steps of the altar, still trying new constructions and still always just missing the solution.

CECIL BINNEY.

*THE TENNYSONS AT FARRINGFORD: A
VICTORIAN VISTA.*

*DRAWN FROM THE UNPUBLISHED PAPERS OF
MRS. JAMES T. FIELDS.*

BY M. A. DE WOLFE HOWE.

THERE is nothing essentially Victorian in the cutting of vistas. In every civilised period the artificers of landscape have known and practised the art of opening views, varying in some measure with the taste of the time. In the same scenes of nature, and in the same period, the eyes of different persons see different things—even as Oscar Wilde, in the midst of Victorianism, observed in the sunset a flattering imitation of the painter's art. Yet the Victorian landscape, as poets and painters have preserved its outline, had distinctive characteristics of its own; and the Victorian interiors, with their furnishings both of house and of mind, were unmistakably themselves.

It is the present fashion to look upon all things Victorian with the tolerant amusement that is accorded to black walnut and horse-hair. Yet the collectors are beginning to turn their attention to various objects of the period, apparently without much reference to their intrinsic beauty. If old glass bottles, lamps, and dishes of crude design and colour are worth collecting, surely an authentic picture of a highly typical Victorian personage and his surroundings deserves recovery and preservation.

Such a picture is to be found in the pages now to be copied from a travel diary of 1859 and a letter of 1869. Both were written by Mrs. James T. Fields, whose husband was one of the American publishers of the chief writers in Victorian England as well as in his own New England. Each passage deals with a visit to Mr. and Mrs.—not yet Lord and Lady—Tennyson at their Farringford house on the Isle of Wight. When the first visit occurred in 1859, Mrs. Fields, twenty-four years old, less than five years married, was making her first acquaintance with Europe. She was then a young woman of singular beauty and personal charm, filled with poetic enthusiasms, and thrilled to the finger-tips by the contact with the great figures in the English world of letters with whom her husband's many friendships and business relations brought her into touch. Dickens and Thackeray, Charles Reade

and George Eliot, and a host of others, illuminate the pages of the journal in which she made a faithful record of her experiences. Of all the great personages of the time, the Poet Laureate was of course the greatest, and a visit to his house on the Isle of Wight imparted to the July days on which it was accomplished a redness of letter not to be found elsewhere in the diarist's almanac.

Ten years later, in 1869, Mrs. Fields and her husband visited England again, taking with them as a travelling companion James Russell Lowell's daughter Mabel, afterwards Mrs. Edward Burnett, and at that time twenty-one years old. A second visit was then paid to Farringford. At thirty-five Mrs. Fields was no less keenly responsive to the provocations of sentiment in such an experience than at twenty-five. Her account of it is found in a letter of which the superscription and date have been destroyed; but as the letter was saved with many others addressed to her sister, Mrs. James H. Beal, of Boston, it was presumably written to her; and the date of the visit—May 25-27, 1869—is fixed by the Diary of William Allingham, a guest of the Tennysons at the same time.

Mrs. Fields herself probably refreshed her memory of these two visits by looking at the first-hand records of them before writing the papers, 'Tennyson,' and 'Emily, Lady Tennyson,' included in her 'Authors and Friends'; but she made no direct use of them. In the 'Memories of a Hostess,' which I prepared for publication in 1922, there is a reference to these passages, and an explanation of their omission from that book on the score that its primary purpose was to depict Mrs. Fields as a hostess, in her own house. The intimation that the passages might be brought to light at some later day is now acted upon.

So much for the recording guest at Farringford. As for the host—Tennyson himself—a bit of observation, completely post-Victorian in tone, has recently made its appearance in 'The Letters of Sir Walter Raleigh.' Writing to a friend in 1903, this penetrating discoverer of the weak points in his fellow-creatures proclaimed Leslie Stephen a good man, and went on to declare :

'He says that Literature is a demoralising occupation, because success implies publicity. Fancy grieving because having found a glow-worm and having written down how you found it and printed your account, you hear nobody say, "How delightful." But that's where poets get to—mostly. Think of Tennyson, who, whenever he saw an American, ran to the nearest hedge, and stuck his head in it, and listened with beating heart for the American's remarks.

And if the American said nothing he went home sick. Jolly sort of life, isn't it. But it's the life you lead, if you write.'

Post-Victorians ourselves, we may smile at the image of Tennyson with his head in a Farringford hedge while Mr. and Mrs. Fields were visiting him. But if he overheard any of their remarks, he must have gone home feeling far from dejected. Fortunately for his peace of mind, no profane Sir Walter was at hand to mar the Victorian strain of worship.

First, then, for the diary of 1859, broken here and there with a word of explanation :

'[London]. Wednesday, July 13th. Mr. Field Talfourd breakfasted with us and brought two photographs of his pictures of Mr. and Mrs. Browning. They seemed to me wonderful. . . . Packed and started at 5 o'clock for the Isle of Wight. Arrived at Southampton at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7, crossed in the *Pearl* to Cowes, the golden sun gently wishing us good-night on the one side while the round pale moon rose to welcome us on the other. Passed a miserable night at the Fountain at Cowes.

'Thursday, July 14th. Took a fly at 10 A.M., and drove 16 miles between perpetual hedges to Plumbly's Hotel where we had already engaged rooms. The drive was delicious, cool and beautiful. We were both so happy, feeling the cup of life and love brimmed.

'Rested a little, re-packed our small box, and at the urgent request of Mr. and Mrs. Tennyson went there to pass a few days. Their house is very large, rambling and irregular, full of comfort, beauty, quiet—peace, I should say, because Mrs. Tennyson is a holy woman and diffuses her atmosphere throughout. There are lilies growing everywhere, ivory grottoes of sweet shining in every garden plot, and there are hilly downs stretching far, far away to the shining sea itself. The Italian ilex grows luxuriantly before and behind the house, while the rose and ivy peep in at every window. Human life assumes a new phase from the house of Tennyson. You are lifted to a higher plane of Truth. Practically, true to his ideal, the extremest simplicity and elegance are here combined in conversation, in manners and the minutest household arrangements. Indeed, there is a rare union of negligence and care found here which could not, I fear, be seen in the new world, implying intelligence and a certain refinement in the very servants themselves.

'We came to the house punctually at 5 as Mr. Tennyson had said that was the dinner hour. Finding no one in the drawing-room, however, we looked about at all the pictures, etc., for a time. Presently Mrs. Tennyson came in in her garden hat, received us

most kindly with a gentle smile but few words. Tennyson soon followed her and said he would be my chamberlain. He ran quickly up before and threw open a little door leading from the larger bedroom and said, "Tell Mr. Fields not to break his neck running down those stairs." Then urging me to be comfortable he quickly departed. I heard soon a rustle, but no step. It was Mrs. Tennyson. She came gently speaking with a few words of welcome in a low faint voice and looking at me with weary eyes. She is slight and frail but intellectually and morally strong, and with a direct personal influence about her such as Shakespeare has in some way contrived to express most remarkably in his female delineations. Her step is long in walking, full of native dignity—yet perfect simplicity, while you feel her sincerity in every movement and expression. She reminded me of Millais's pictures, perhaps because the colours she wears are subdued and her postures striking and graceful.

'In half an hour we met at dinner. She wore white fastened with soft blue ribbon and a cashmere mantle because the evening was chill. Tennyson himself wore gray. We were but four, just the right number, we thought, and the talk was pleasant. Napoleon haunts his thought. He believes him about to attack England. Will America help us? he cries—we are but 50,000 against 600,000.' [In May of 1859 Tennyson's 'preparedness' poem, with its refrain of

'Ready, be ready to meet the storm!
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen, form!'

had appeared in *The Times*. A similar note of alarum was struck in 'Jack Tar,' a song for sailors, first published in the Memoir of Tennyson by his son. This was a product of the same time and state of mind—which evidently coloured Tennyson's conversation at the moment.] 'He told the story of Campbell's Spanish parrot, probably forgetting he [Campbell] had written it out.' [Could Tennyson have been counting upon an American visitor's ignorance of Campbell's verses, 'The Parrot of Mull: A Domestic Anecdote'? The story of the exiled bird that 'dropt down and died' on hearing 'the Spanish speech' after many years in the island of Mull was none the less a good dinner-table anecdote.] 'Just after the soup we heard tiny feet in the passage and two little boys with golden hair and dove-coloured frocks and large white ruffles danced into the room. They ran quickly and without a word to kiss each one and then each put a chair by their mother's side. By and bye they made fairylike pages of themselves, serving their mother and father to the delight of both.

'After dinner Tennyson showed me his study. He said the

view was beautiful as a dream sometimes when the rosy light shone through the white lilies and sifted down to the lawn through the emerald sky of leaves and lifted the distant sea as it were to a heaven of brilliance. Mrs. Tennyson and myself retired early, but Jamie and Tennyson walked together far into the night. He would push the boughs aside in the thick blackness and cry, "See there! how exquisite that magnolia is, and there is jasmine! feel, these are laurel leaves, true laurel." Late, very late, they came home tired yet refreshed.

'Friday, July 15th. At Tennysons'. Ill in the morning. Mrs. Tennyson sent breakfast to me and Jamie went for a walk. The children came to ask a morning kiss. Hallam and Lionel and I sat writing in my room. Presently Mrs. Tennyson came so kindly and warmly to ask what she could send me. She had had no time before she said, as if in apology.

'Jamie came in an hour after, very warm from walk but wonderfully impressed with the grandeur of the Needles, saying that nothing but Niagara could compete with it. It was late for lunch, but I went down with Jamie and found Mrs. Tennyson had freshly prepared it for us. Tennyson came in soon in a slouched hat to sit and chat with us. As we sat there the little donkey chaise came to the door for those angel-looking boys. The nurse brought them each tiny whips, then jumped in herself and quickly they disappeared behind the trees both belabouring the favourite donkey happy to be so treated. We soon strolled out among the "roses and lilies" near the house while Tennyson unfolded to our astonished minds the inexhaustible knowledge of his own. Over the fields and over the stiles, through the trees and through the woods we wandered, stopping to listen to his delicious talk from time to time. Coming to a field of golden grain fast ripening in the summer sun he leaned upon the gate and looked lovingly upon it while the winds swayed and fluttered every drooping head. Then he would make us guess the names of flowers and trees innumerable, laughing with us and at us if we made mistakes. He glories in the fertility of the soil upon the island. He says, whatever growing thing he transplanted there, it seem always to flourish as well and often better than in its native soil. He told us how he was pleased when his brother who had been fourteen years in Italy praised the exceeding beauty of the Italian ilex which grows before his house. No American could help praising the magnificent magnolia, trained vine-like over the house, nor the traveller from the East the Cedar of Lebanon. He said, as we sat resting under the trees, "Did you know if the daisy were pressed lightly under the foot it would turn red? That foolish fellow Ruskin said I had introduced an impossibility in my 'Maud' where I say,

'Her feet have touched the meadows
And left the daisies rosy.'

Only a few people could read my 'Maud' aloud. It requires immense strength of lungs. I will read it to you before you go."

'Now it was time to return home to prepare for dinner. Company was expected, Mr. and Mrs. Bradley and Lady Grant with her niece, Miss Cotton. Mr. Bradley was intelligent and talked pleasantly.' [Of these guests, the Rev. George Granville Bradley, afterwards Master of University College, Oxford, and Dean of Westminster, had in 1858 become headmaster of Marlborough. In sending his son Hallam to this school Tennyson said he 'sent him not to Marlborough but to Bradley.' In 1860 Bradley took a house near Farringford.] 'Tennyson would growl assent to what was said, and now and then say something quite worthy of remembrance. Mrs. Tennyson in her floating dress with her sweet boys upon each hand seemed more like a new creation of some new Raphael than a living woman serving in this world.

'We adjourned early to the drawing-room for dessert as usual. Presently the bell rang and Tennyson, fearing guests, asked the gentlemen to follow him and was escaping to his eyrie to see the sunset when he was waylaid in flight by the guests themselves. Nevertheless he kept his way in spite of Mrs. Tennyson's imploring voice that he should omit it for once. Soon he returned, however, with his friends and touched me gently on the shoulder saying, "Come and I will show now a sad English sunset." With eager steps I followed in the darkness and he led me quickly to the window saying, "Look, how sad it is, how sad and still. Do you see that cloud?" pointing to a thin vapour in the West. "Yes," I said. "Well, that was a dark black streak when I called you. The light only touched it on one edge, now it is perforated with light as all dark things will be one day. This view is like Rembrandt to-night, but we should hardly speak of a painter before such a scene as this. Is not the highest painter however the exactest copyist?" "No," I said, "it is he who can inform the picture with the largest expression of Duty." "Well," he says, "what I really think of this you will find in 'Elaine.' I want you to see Watts' picture of me in London." Then he repeated,

"As when a painter, poring on a face
Divinely thro' all hindrance finds the man
Behind it, and so paints him that his face
The shape and colour of a mind and life
Lives for his children ever at its best
And fullest."

'Then we went below and all asked him to read "Guinevere." He said, "I can't read here," looking at the chair his wife had placed for him at the table. "I must sit where no one can see me." He threw himself as he spoke upon a crimson couch, asking his wife to sit before him, which she did, but her light ethereal form was only sufficient to bring into bolder relief the strong dark face of the reader. His voice breathed out a thrilling chant upon the air and as the hours faded he read on. Soon we separated for the night. I fell asleep remembering the sister-kiss of Emily Tennyson.

'Saturday morning. We both arose well to find another lovely day, breezy and cool, to hear the birds skipping about the window and the rose tapping on the pane. We were downstairs before nine o'clock hoping we might arrive in season for service which Jamie had heard her read the day before. She was there, but service was over. Jamie and I breakfasted together. Tennyson looked in with his hat on as if disturbed to find us there so early. After we had finished he came and took his breakfast as if he did not wish to speak a word. I sat reading diligently in a corner. Soon he turned and said, "Got something you like to read?" An answer in the affirmative satisfied him and he read *The Times* and took his breakfast in silence.

'Miss Cotton came early to drive us to the "Needles." Such a vision as it was I hope we may never forget, such wonder as possessed the head at the sight of the lovely Downs, the precipitous cliffs, with their wild inhabitants the birds, and the water itself far, far below, so far that the ships were like swans to our astonished eyes, and waveless as the grassy Down whereon we stood. While looking at the sea I seemed in Italy, such a silvery halo dimmed the enchanted distance making the earth and heavens, the real and the ideal, blend with such entire harmony that we forgot the things we were and lived but in the purer regions of the soul.

'We shortened our lovely drive because the poet and Lady Grant were to lunch with us and afterwards "Maud" was to be read. We found a charming feast prepared and the poet was induced to join us, although it was not his hour for taking dinner, and once more the gentle boys danced in, kissing each one except their mother. "They were out of kisses," she said, before they reached her, but they stayed pillowing their graceful heads upon her breast with full contented hearts.

'And after lunch came "Maud." He said, "How can I read after such a mid-day meal?" Then to me, "Come and sit before me that you may not see me read." I obeyed as all must to his will in such matters. Finally, he read his "Maud," the whole great story, stopping occasionally to explain or to question, but

eager to gratify us, read steadily. Our carriage came before he finished, but he said it could wait, if we did not meet the cars, and again read on. Full of pathos, full of beauty, and at last full of misery. Here he made an end.

'And now, this visit, a star in our firmament of happiness, lives but in memory. Her parting kiss still dwells upon my cheek and the parting wave of her graceful hand from within the vine-clad doorway. The immortal Alfred stands by her side cheered by her sweet beauty and swings his hat full of good wishes to us, but the trees hide them and we are left together to be thankful for the privilege of having dwelt beneath a roof sheltering Wisdom and Holiness, the rarest and divinest attainments man can reach.'

And now for the letter of 1869. In 'William Allingham : A Diary' an entry for May 25 of that year sets the scene and throws bits of sidelight on the second visit of Mr. and Mrs. Fields to the Tennysons : 'Lymington. Invitation from Mrs. Tennyson for to-day to meet "Mr. and Mrs. Fields and Miss (*Biglow Papers*) Lowell." 3 o'clock steamer, I find them on board and introduce myself.' The letter of Mrs. Fields may well be interrupted by other sentences from Allingham's diary.

'We have had one of the ideal three days' visits which are so rare in this world. Farringford was looking its loveliest, and Mr. and Mrs. Tennyson were the kindest and most attentive host and hostess possible. They live in the old style of English aristocracy, which, subject as they are to visits from royalty and people of high rank, is quite necessary ; beside they both take to it easily, being of high family themselves. You must think of Prospero and the Enchanted Island while I talk of them, for nothing less can give you the faintest idea of their personnel, or their life, only there is no Caliban—at least I have never seen him.

'Mrs. Tennyson kindly asked Mr. William Allingham to join us and go over to pass a few days. He met us on the boat therefore and pointed out the places of interest as we approached. We saw an old castle of the time of Charles the First and went into the Inn of the same period—most quaint and clean and pretty. The island grew more and more green and flower-set and perfect as we drew near to the poet's manor. It was nearly five o'clock, the most lovely time of the day, when we turned in by the leafy avenue. Mrs. Tennyson had sent her carriage to meet us and we came so quietly up to the door that she did not hear the approach, being in the drawing-room with two little orphan nieces who had pretty golden hair over their black dresses and who soon went away bashful and childlike with their governess. After a most gracious

welcome from Mrs. Tennyson, King Alfred came in. He immediately took Jamie for a little turn out of doors and I went with Mr. Allingham while Mabel went up to dress for dinner. Coming in half an hour later I found the first bell had rung for dinner. And you can imagine how quickly I dressed, curling my hair and putting on my lilac dress, but forgetting to wear the laburnum I had picked and which was hanging everywhere in golden showers. Fortunately I arrived in season in the drawing-room, but very soon I saw they were waiting for Mabel so I went in search of her. Poor child! She had been so entranced with jasmine and magnolia peeping in at her window, by the voices of birds and the odour and colour of the distant sea that she had been dreaming at the window till too late. However, a moment later and we went down together, but the blood had flushed to her temples and she looked quite bashful at the thought of having been late, and when Mr. Tennyson said in his rough play, "Does your father write letters?" she seemed quite ready to sink into the earth. Considering all things, however, she held her ground well as she almost invariably does, though she was speechless all the evening.

'I should like to photograph for you the picture of the dining-room as we sat at table, but the best I can do is to bring you some of Mrs. Cameron's photographs to look at, for she is now a neighbour of Tennyson and is doing wonderful things. Nothing can describe the loveliness of Mrs. Tennyson—I never saw anybody at all suggestive of her in manner except Mrs. Putnam (Mabel's aunt). Happily Watts has painted a portrait of her which is very lovely and very like, so that others may know some day what her loveliness was in a slight measure. They are both more suggestive of the time of the other King Alfred—Boadicea or any antique England you may fancy most, than of the present; but everything is as simple as in those days. Half the dinner, or until dessert, it is the custom of the house to remain in the dining-room where two servants and a page wait; afterward we adjourn to the drawing-room where dessert is laid and everybody sits unrestrainedly as they choose and help each other to fruit and wine. Mrs. Tennyson is always in delicate health, therefore she lies down at once on a couch drawn up by the fire while I am given a stately chair by the poet made for Queen Emma from one of their own ilex trees.' [Allingham in his Diary tells of the crossing to the Isle of Wight, the delight of the American visitors in the 'Old George Inn,' and other sights on the way to Farringford. 'Dinner 6.30,' he writes, 'brisk chat. Mr. F's stories of Thackeray in Boston—"all the lecture tickets sold. Then I can't do less than put my feet out of the cab windows," and he did so. Big oyster—"feel as if I had swallowed a baby"'—still a new story in the sixties!]

'Mr. Allingham is a full man who never seems to forget what he reads and who talks as brooks run. He is an Irishman and Tennyson loved to run him upon his nationality and his Irish king, "Brian Boru," but A. seemed to understand it perfectly.' [Allingham again, on Wednesday the 26th : 'After dinner a discussion on Ireland. A.T. as usual, while granting and liking the lyrical and humorous qualities of the Kelts and their pleasant manners, calls it "that horrible island," and will not allow that it has any history of its own worth the least notice, knowing in fact not a whit more of its history than does the average Englishman—who knows, as nearly as possible, *nothing*. To him, as to A.T., the very name of "Brian Boru" is a joke.

'I try to make Brian be seen as a real and important historic personage, and win audience from the Americans, and perhaps some attention, but A.T. plays his part of the deaf adder, and we have to wind all up with a laugh.'] 'In the morning Mr. Tennyson said to him, "I heard you whistling and talking to yourself this morning." It seems he occupied an attic room alongside, much to A's amazement, and the day after A. told us that Mr. T. stalked into his room at night in his undress and talked an hour walking about his room.

'Perhaps what we enjoyed most were the walks with him. One afternoon we went six miles (over the Downs and back) to where the Needles shoot into the sea. He knows the growing things for beloved companions, and looks and seems a part of Nature in whatever mood she may be. So are we all, I know, in some subtle way—but he looks it always. No, I think the finest thing was, to go up into his attic-study and hear him read "Boadicea" and parts of "Maud." The strange prophetic climax which lurks in all true poetry is in his voice which sways and swells like the trumpet of Uriel. Oh, what would I give to be able to reproduce to you the awe and gentleness of his great presence. "There is none like (him)—none."

'Well, if memory will prove steadfast I will talk of him forever and of his home when we come back till you feel him come out of the dark and stand before you. We have brought quantities of ivy and flowers away, and the ivy we shall make grow at home. He seemed to find pleasure in our enjoyment of nature, and we stood ever so long on the Downs watching the larks mount up to heaven's gate. He said the first day he ever heard the nightingale in his garden was the day Prince Albert came to visit him. He gathered for us great heavy roses and told us to wear them at dinner, and would sit down a few moments at breakfast, which is not his custom apparently, and wrote his name upon Mrs. Cameron's photo of himself and in his poems which he gave Mabel and me, beside an

inscription in a little copy of Keats which he gave to Mr. Fields (one he has always carried in his pockets) and in every way showed himself a most attentive host. He is a strong critic of language and was always listening for our "American accent" or laughing at Allingham for some Irishism.

'But it is very late and I have lost a visit from Charles Reade by writing this—the others have gone to bed. To-morrow early we go to pass the day at Richmond with our best beloved C. D., for nothing can touch as you know our affection for him. Next week we say good-bye to London and go to stay at Gad's Hill.

'Ever your affectionate,

'ANNIE.'

In the 'Memoir' of Tennyson by his son there is an entry from Mrs. Tennyson's journal for May 25, 1869, relating to the American visitors. It reads in part: 'Miss Lowell said that her grandmother, Mrs. Spence, used to shut her shutters and put crape on her knocker every 4th of July. Her grandfather was even banished for his love of England. A. assured her that he would drink a "cup of wine" to her grandmother's memory. Miss Lowell saw her first cowslips here. Very pleasant guests.'

If there was nothing to condone the 'Irishisms' of Allingham, here at least was a makeweight against 'our American accent.'

DEERSTALKERS: PROFESSIONAL AND AMATEUR.

FORTY-SIX years ago there appeared a little handbook on this subject written by Alexander Macrae, a stalker. At the beginning of this year a much larger work by 'An Old Stalker' was published. I believe that these two volumes represent all that has been written on this field-sport from what may be called the professional point of view. The former is a somewhat dry little treatise, but its matter is very sound; had it not been so Horatio Ross, the famous rifle-shot, who writes an introduction, would not have given his authority to it. I know intimately the difficult forest in which Macrae learnt some of his work.

'Days on the Hill' is a much longer and more ambitious exercise. Mr. Eric Parker, the shooting editor of the *Field*, who writes a charming preface, does not give the author's name, but there is a portrait of him in the book, and from this, and from what he himself says, we know that he is a representative of the older school of hill-men. This unknown writer has made good use of the experience gained in over forty years of forest work. He is, as Mr. Parker says, 'an observant naturalist, who has watched and learnt the habits of birds and beasts other than the red-deer; he is that rare combination, one who is skilled in a great field-sport and who can write of what he has seen and known.' He has a distinct sense of humour even when things go against him, and often a quaint dry way of expressing himself.

A novice, searching through these pages for information and help, might be excused for thinking that this hunter of deer was singularly unfortunate in the 'gentlemen' he had to look after. They are for the most part stout, sometimes very stout; they are generally elderly, often old; they were naturally bad walkers, especially on steep ground. They were self-opinionated and had a great belief in their own skill, and they were as a rule extremely bad shots. In addition, when matters went wrong they were sometimes very disagreeable; the majority must have been unpleasant companions. But the beginner should understand this: it is, as a rule, much easier to write about sport when it is bad than when everything goes well. The account of a day's stalking, relating how half a dozen good stags fell to as many shots, would

make poor reading unless it was undertaken by a master-hand. The tale of a stag wounded early in the morning and finished—or missed—say on the first of October, just when the shooting light had gone, can be made much more attractive. We may be certain that this 'Old Stalker' quite understood this; he picked the unfavourable samples out of the wallet of his memory; he could, I am sure, have given a much longer list of those who shot straight and were pleasant and considerate companions, whether things went well or badly. There is something akin, in this sport, to Alpine climbing; if you have good guides and yet fail in the attempt on your peak or pass you put no blame on them; you feel that all has been done that could be done and sympathise with your leaders as well as with yourself. So—if you have confidence in your stalkers; if that down-wind or into-the-sun attempt, which does seem a little rash, does not come off you know that it was, under the circumstances, right to try it, and you do not lose the confidence. The great majority of the men I have been out with on the hill have been good men, generally very good. It has of course happened to me now and then to spend long days with others who were not skilful in their work, and then would come the feeling that the fair chance of a shot was lost when it ought not to have been lost, and that liberties were taken which were not legitimate.

This writer has a good deal to say about 'misses'; there is often a good and honest excuse for them. A golfer on a Monday hits his ball well and accurately with all his clubs; he goes out on the Tuesday, full of confidence, and he will tell you that he cannot hit it at all; there may be something wrong with his liver; he has been smoking too much; his mind may not be at ease. All these things affect the deerstalker, but in addition he has many other evils to contend with over which he has no control. The golfer can look at his ball as long as he likes; he will not frighten it, nor need he hide from it; he can wave his club over it as many times as he pleases.

I have shot some hundreds of stags; I have missed a great many, and I have made—to the stalker and to myself—every possible excuse which the mind of man can conceive of. You are shaking after a hard run; breathless after a long climb; you were numbed with cold after a wet crawl; frozen after lying some hours in snow high up. There was a strange light when shooting towards the west in the afternoon; the deer were just bolting, or

had bolted ; you could only see half his shoulder ; the sight was blurred by waving grass or heather, and you dared not rise higher ; you could not rise higher because of a rock or the slope in the ground ; you were at ' safety ' when you first squeezed the trigger ; the cartridge hung fire a little ; you could not see the stag well—you could not see him *at all*. I could fill pages with the list.

Many of these excuses are quite honest ; very possibly the deer *would* have been killed if it had not been for the cold or the bad light or the interfering grass ; the stalker may believe all of them or some of them ; the good stalker will certainly believe in some of them. Speaking for myself, and I think for the majority of men who have had experience in the forest, I assert that the ' Professional ' shows himself to be emphatically a *gentleman* in the way he behaves to the man on whom the final act depends. The former's work is over ; long enduring patience and skill have made possible, perhaps easy late in the afternoon, what had seemed to be impossible for many hours ; he has got his companion within reasonable distance of the stag ; he can do nothing more. And then—with perhaps no excuse at all—the fair shot is missed ; the thud of the bullet is in the peat, not the shoulder. The long day's work is done, and in the dusk the little company start for a maybe far-distant lodge, thinking unutterable things. In over forty years' experience I have never heard the most sorely-tried stalker say a cross or disagreeable word. Getting back to that lodge is often a long-drawn-out, dreary business—if you are soaked to the skin and it is dark and you have no stag that night to weigh. Cynical Fortune seems to have brought it about that, when there is only one lodge in a good big forest it is nearly always on a march.

A clever retort was made to a relation of mine, a keen boy at the time and a good shot in his day ; discussing the risks run by stags late in the season he said to the stalker : ' If I was a stag, Kenny, I would always keep quite safe. I would keep to the highest tops in the daytime and only go down to feed on the flats when it got dark. I would——' ' If Mr. Charles was a stag,' replied the stalker, ' I know where he would be.' ' Where ? ' eagerly asked the other. ' In the larder,' said Kenny. I have related this little incident before, but it is perhaps worth giving again. Our author tells us how he was once out with a very good rifle-shot who became demoralised, and for ten days, each day getting chances, was blank—' at short and long distances the result was always the same.' Here is an instance of a good-humoured cor-

rection by a very experienced old stalker to the boy mentioned above who was afflicted with the same trouble. He had taken great pains to get him at last right up to the deer, and once more there was a failure. 'Oh! Farquhar! he was not twenty yards away!' 'Beg your pardon, Sir,'—the old man's invariable preface to every remark—'twenty-two yards.'

This writer rather favours the practice of letting the stalker finish off a wounded stag, and he gives instances of the loss of deer caused by not doing so. His 'gentleman' was sixty, the lessee of a forest which should yield 25 or 30 stags; the total for the season in question was 8 poor beasts; during its last week 31 shots were fired, and the result was one hind. Certainly with such a customer the stalker should do the finishing. But most men would feel that there was something wanting in the little triumph if the end was not brought about by the master. It would be rather akin to the salmon-fisher handing the rod to his gaffer directly he hooked a fish. Stoddart relates how this used to be regularly done by an old angler on the Tweed.

There is a very interesting chapter on 'Wind and Light.' Possibly some who have done a fair amount of stalking may never have attempted to go directly down-wind on deer, or have made use of the sun in the approach. The writer shows how this can sometimes be done. Macrae in his hand-book touches on the same subject, and gives a clear little account of his experiences. The first is only possible when the deer are under a high steep rock or ridge, preferably when the wind is strong; then the scent—which is noticeable on plainer ground for a mile or so—is blown over them. I think the approach in full sight of a stag with a bright sun exactly behind you is not very often tried.

Some of the 'Old Stalker's' charges seem to have had a high opinion of their skill when dealing with the difficult problems which are continually arising in the forest. A good deal of nonsense is written about the ordinary sportsman doing his own stalking. When the owner of a forest shoots regularly, has good eyes, and knows his ground, he should do this, and often does. But that a man of even some experience should be encouraged or permitted to take the first place on strange ground is an absurdity. In forests where the hills are high and steep and the glens narrow he could not gauge the wind especially if it was strong; know how it was blowing two or three miles away where the deer were. He would greatly disturb the ground, his appearance would be

welcomed by neighbours over the marches, and—if he was given his head—he would soon ruin a beat. On low hills—say on some of the grouse moors in Caithness now cleared for deer, the business is much simpler, and the amateur would be able to do something here.

The 'Old Stalker' has a great deal to say about dogs, whose use, he says, has now 'almost, if not altogether, been abandoned,' partly because of the greater accuracy of rifles, and also owing to the disturbance they cause in forests. There must be some disturbance. But if the 'tracker' is well trained and wise; if the dog is only slipped after a really badly hit stag, never till the deer with him are well away, and *never* near a march, little harm may be done. It is maddening to see a sorely wounded beast get into the shelter of a rough wood where a good dog would certainly have him in a few minutes: where, without that help, you may search for a long day and never see him again. The writer speaks unfavourably of collies, but his experience of them seems to have been very small. I have got many a stag with a clever collie which would otherwise have surely escaped. And many a one too with a big yellow 'tracker' who very seldom failed me. I think the knowledge that you have this help at hand gives confidence in shooting. No doubt the modern rifle is a great asset. I started with a Snider, using a pin-fire paper cartridge; at 120 yards you had, after firing, time—almost—to get out a pocket-handkerchief and blow your nose before you heard the splash of the bullet on a stone. For old eyes, and young eyes too, sometimes, the Mänlicher with a telescopic sight is a wonderful weapon. The 'Henry' was certainly a beautiful invention. The double .450 and .400 express are more difficult to use quickly. I know that if all my stalking had been done with the Austrian weapon many a stag would have gone into the larder which I left unscathed on the hill.

The temper of this stalker must often have been sorely tried by some of his followers. He seems to have had good control over it: only once does he give himself away. He was trying to get 'a Dignitary of the Church of England' into some hinds; there were about 200 of them; they were passing behind high broken peat banks, showing themselves for a little and then going out of sight; moving at a walking pace, a hundred yards away. 'I pointed out a hind; my companion raised the rifle, and I watched the beast till she disappeared. A second and then a third time the same thing occurred. Now I consider a miss quite excusable,

as on such occasions the sportsman has merely done his best and failed, but to abstain from shooting when a good chance offers was about the greatest irritation I had to endure whilst stalking. Picking out another hind, I told him in a somewhat peremptory manner not to let her pass. At this he wailed out, "Oh dear! Oh dear! what shall I do? what shall I do?" "What the devil would you do but shoot?" I replied, my patience thoroughly exhausted." The parson did at last shoot, 'but might just as well have not.' The narrator adds, 'I think this was his first and last day's deer-stalking.'

Long ago a young man, whom I knew well as an old man forty years ago, the eccentric owner of great possessions in the north, was out in one of his forests. His stalker got him within reasonable distance of a good stag, but he refused to shoot, and said he must be nearer. So the hundred yards was reduced to fifty, and still there was the refusal. The ground was favourable, and the harassed man—who knew perfectly well that his master could have made certain of the deer from the first position—crawled on and on till the two were within twenty yards of the unconscious beast. Then the laird stood up and did not fire. The horrified stalker forgot everything about manners, and consigned the owner of the forest to the most uncomfortable place he could think of, in the plainest possible language. When the latter got home he complained to his mother, and she sent for the stalker and asked him what he meant by such behaviour. I have always thought that this man got out of an awkward position very cleverly; he said it was the stag he had condemned and not his master. In parenthesis as it were—it has nothing to do with my subject—I relate another little incident in the sporting life of my old friend. One autumn afternoon he had a big scotch-fir wood beaten to him and fired a shot. When the men appeared he told them to pick up a blackcock lying in a certain place. The keepers hunted the ground carefully till it was dusk and could find nothing. Then they were told to come back the next day and search again; the bird had to be found. And all that following day the ground was tramped over with the same result. When the head-keeper realised that these operations were to be carried out on yet a third day, and might indeed be extended through the remainder of the autumn, he decided on determined action. He got up very early, shot a blackcock, and when it was sufficiently cold and stiff, took it to the castle. He said 'I'm very glad, Sir Charles, that we've found

that bird at last. I can't think how we missed it.' 'Where did you find it?' asked the baronet. 'Just where you told us, near that big spruce,' replied the keeper. 'You—confounded—liar,' said the other; 'I never shot one.'

There is a long chapter about grouse in a forest; this bird is not as a rule wanted here. Many a good stag's life has been saved, many a long hard stalk ruined by his alarmed cry when disturbed. On a calm day the sound carries far and puts every deer anywhere near on the alert; they well understand that it may mean danger. And other deer far away, who hear nothing, notice the movement of the single beast or the herd. It is often said that where no shooting is done grouse tend to decrease, and as there is little or no trapping in such places they have many more enemies to fight against than their kin down on low moors. I have always believed in this theory, but of late years grouse seem to have made some changes in their habits; at any rate we hear a great deal more about their migration. In some forests they are much more numerous than they used to be; bags up to seventy brace in a day were shot last year in districts where, twenty years ago, you would not have been able to *see* so many. And this in places where eagles are daily soaring about, and many ravens and hoodie-crows and gulls. In large forests they can, of course, be shot without the deer being disturbed; in others harm is done.

Another long chapter is given to 'Hummels'—hornless stags. The writer refers to the commonly held opinion that 'the branching antlers are valuable weapons of attack and defence,' and shows its fallacy: 'the horns are used for pushing and fencing,' no stag, however strong and brave he may be, will face a big hummel; the hornless head, driven by a heavy body, acts like a battering-ram. It is not uncommon to find the body of a deer torn and broken up by horn-work, but this has been done when the beast was dead, or sorely wounded after an exhausting fight.

There is a little note of sadness at the end of the book when the writer has to acknowledge something of the burden of time. 'Or wilt thou climb the sunny hill on the October afternoon?' Now the invitation is accepted with some small hesitation, after a hard morning's work. A little later and it must be declined with decision, even without that work's handicap. In some forests where there are great, far-stretching ridges holding small corries high up, stalking can be very easy. You may have several chances, and get home in good time, little more tired than after two or three

rounds of golf. But where the hills are high and often isolated, and their sides steep and smooth, much more exertion will be required. The morning climb may take you into the neighbourhood of 3,000 ft. Then in an hour or so you spy deer quite low down and you have to get to them. After the stalk you may see, far away, other stags on your level, but on the bare coverless hill you can do nothing with them without climbing once more to the top and then again going down. In an extreme case these operations may have to be carried out three or four times on a long day. Such work is not fitted for old or stout people. As a very general rule a really first-class hillman will beat the best of amateurs when the climbing is hard and it has to be done quickly. He should beat him. The stalker has been getting up bad places and running down them ever since he was a tiny boy. The collated experience of many years is concentrated in his thighs and ankles and knee-joints for action, and in his eyes and brain for perfect balance. The present writer used to think he was a fairly good man on a hill, either up or down, but he was never conceited enough to believe that in certain places he was in the same 'class' as his companions. To do your part, however hard it might be, at your own pace, was a simple matter; it was when the 'pinch' came—the hurry—that the best man won.

It is in crises such as these that the most difficult work in a forest is done. Late in the afternoon you wound a stag: there is a sanctuary two or three miles away and he at once sets his head towards it. You have to reach a pass on the ridge a thousand feet above you, perhaps much more. It has to be reached in a given time, in a certain number of minutes; you must allow an extra one or two when there to get your wind, to let your heart beat a little less vehemently, for the shot. The stag is perhaps a mile from you; he is badly but not mortally hit; he cannot go very fast, but he gets over the ground quicker than you do. He makes for the safety-place by another road, a longer one, you think, than that you take, but yours is the roughest and steepest. It is not worth while to play the game that comes off then unless you mean to play it to the very utmost ounce of your strength. The stalker increases the pace; one wishes he had an elephant gun on his shoulder instead of the light rifle, to keep him back. It is an exciting race; the competitors far apart, both making for the same goal on converging lines—the pass that leads into the sanctuary. If you had the time to spy you would see the deer

with his tongue out and his flanks heaving; he never stops save for a moment, to see the best way round some difficult bit of rock, or over a wild burn.

Of course a chase of this kind is anything but a common occurrence, but in the course of years there is sure to be the necessity for it. I have had many such. I think the majority have ended in failure. As the routes run together the deer is very likely to catch sight of his pursuers; you cannot move cautiously when time is so short: then the man with the rifle may be too blown to hold it steadily for the shot. The old stalker has much to say about this kind of work, and laments the slowness and hopeless inactivity of his well-nourished and elderly companions. 'Clearly,' he lays down, 'men of this class ought never to attempt stalking.'

I never ceased to admire, using the word in its old sense, the way in which one of my hill friends used to cross or go down a wild chaos of broken rocks, lying at steep angles in every possible position, near the top of a great Ross-shire mountain. Following more or less awkwardly, far behind, I used to wonder what a slip here, at such a pace, would mean. And it was so easily—I will use another word and say it was so elegantly—done. There is a period, a fairly long one, in the life of an active, healthy man when even great exertion is an immense pleasure; he exults in his strength. But steadily and surely the time comes when it has to be reduced, to be given up. Even so you may for years find happiness among the hills; it is pleasant and not at all a sorrow to look back on the older days.

I have spoken of only two 'professional' writers on deer-stalking; there is indeed a third, but he was a poet, and cannot be called a tutor of the art. This forester of an Earl of Breadalbane died in 1812. He wrote in Gaelic, and the stags of his beloved Ben Dorain, a great hill in the Blackmount, come into many of his songs. Robert Buchanan translated two of the most famous ones, and if the originals are as good as the translations they are very good indeed. When the sportsman, 'retired from business,' climbs up to high ground—perhaps to where the ptarmigan has his habitation—to spy and watch and meditate, he might, if he has the least strain of literature in his composition, do worse than put this little book into his pocket. 'Fair-haired Duncan of the Songs' was a minute and accurate observer of anything that had to do with the hill, animate or inanimate; in one short poem he mentions

nearly twenty flowers and grasses, weaving their pretty names into his verses with great naturalness and charm.

I think that this book may become, in its way, a classic ; as has been said it is the one solitary treatise on any scale of the art of deerstalking from a professional's point of view. In its 250 pages it sets down clearly all that the hunter need to know or can be taught by writing ; what is not here must be learnt by experience.

And to bring before the eye yet more clearly the wild mountains and glens where the hunter pursues his distant quarry, there are some beautiful photographs, taken in various forests, by Mr. Frank Wallace.

I am sure that everyone who has to do with deer will be grateful to this fine old forester for his interesting and entertaining book.

GILFRID HARTLEY.

HEARTS OF OAK.

I.

MR. HILARY SLEATH was one of those people who ought to make a fortune but are always, on the contrary, on the verge of starvation.

He was a tall, lank, sandy-haired person, slightly good-looking, decidedly ingenious, and educated in parts. He wasn't a gentleman. He wore a pair of horn-rimmed glasses on the bridge of his rather long nose—not that he needed them to see with, but because they contributed, he thought, to the fierceness and sagacity of his appearance, and at any rate masked a pair of eyes which Nature had designed in a mild and rather washy blue. Hilary was ashamed of those eyes. He looked into them every morning while he shaved, and every morning they disgusted him afresh.

'You're weak,' said Hilary, 'that's what you are.'

It was Hilary's education that had warped him, or rather had brought to light a peculiar and unfortunate kink in his character. Anything he wanted to know—any odd thing to which he took a fancy—he could master with preposterous rapidity; but like so many of us, he could not take a fancy to the proper things. For instance, in the sphere of languages, he knew not a word of French, German, or Italian but was thoroughly conversant with archaic Portuguese and Dutch—tongues which, however attractive in themselves, are generally acknowledged as of less practical value in the struggle for existence. Again, in the sphere of geography, he confined himself to 'The Atlantic Pilot' and similar useful volumes; he could have navigated a ship through Torres Straits but he couldn't have told you the chief town of Poland. I doubt if he had any clear ideas on the Norman Conquest or the Petition of Right; on the other hand he could quote you, with names of ships and their captains, the annals of almost every notable voyage from Magellan onwards. In a word, his mind was an encyclopædia in some matters, in others a blank.

It is hard to make a living in this grudging world on a knowledge of seventeenth-century Dutch, Vasco da Gama's voyages, and the principal coastwise lights of Brazil. More often than not Hilary failed. Employers of labour in Great Britain were not interested

in these matters—or were insufficiently interested to pay anyone for knowing them; and Hilary fell into the usual complacent assumption that there was 'less competition in the Colonies.' He migrated, only to find that while there was no doubt less competition in knowledge of these obscure subjects, there was even less competition still to employ Hilary Sleath. He started in South Africa—principally because he had not the price of a passage to Australia; and in South Africa he landed presently on his beam ends.

Nature, however, is a just creature; for all parasites she has created the appropriate host. Why parasites should persist is another question, but no doubt Nature knows best. She declined to exterminate Hilary. In Durban Hilary met an Indian publicist returning to his native land. The publicist had accumulated about nine hundred pages of pencil notes about South Africa and was utterly unable to make head or tail of them; Hilary persuaded him that he required a secretary and succeeded—principally because the publicist could not understand half what Hilary said and was too proud to admit it. I need not say that Hilary was a ready optimist.

'The white man's top dog in India,' he said besottedly. 'Once I'm there I'm bound to get on.'

Once in India, however, the publicist swindled Hilary over his pay, dumped him in Madras and disappeared up-country to some place whose name Hilary could not remember. (If you can string off the principal lights and soundings between Birkenhead and Buenos Ayres, little things like addresses are apt to slip your memory.) Madras was warm climatically but bitter cold when it came to employment; Hilary sank from a Mount Road hotel to a Vepery boarding-house and thence to a café in Georgetown. There is a delightful statute in India called the European Vagrancy Act, under which destitutes in Hilary's position can present themselves before a magistrate and receive the rail fare to the next magistrate's headquarters; if the magistrate is soft they may receive also sums varying from two to ten rupees from his private purse. Hilary came within close touch of this Act. He would have come closer still but for the reappearance in a new form of Nature's host.

In a public reading-room one day Hilary read an advertisement requiring a man with a 'knowledge of old Dutch and Portuguese; some nautical experience preferred.' He put on his horn-rimmed glasses and read it again, but it remained unchanged.

Inconceivable fact ; someone was actually advertising for a person of just his odd accomplishments !

Box Number 7734 proved to be an elderly gentleman of the name of Sidney Murpin. He lived in a little hutch-like house surrounded by books and the smell that hutch-like houses acquire in a hot climate. He looked at Hilary's still presentable figure dubiously.

'I didn't expect—I thought perhaps some poor Anglo-Indian. I would not be able to offer emoluments——'

'We don't need to quarrel over the emoluments, sir,' said Hilary grandly. 'If the work proves interestin' I would accept something quite small.'

Mr. Murpin named something quite, quite small ; Hilary raised him by fifty per cent. ; they compromised on half of that.

'And exes ?' said Hilary.

'There will be no exes,' said Mr. Murpin, firmly. 'I may give you something for tram-fares now and then.' He proceeded to explain that he was a retired Port Officer and was engaged on a monumental work—namely a history of the British mercantile marine in Indian waters from 1600 to 1750.

'You goin' to call it that ?' said Hilary, interestedly.

Mr. Murpin disclaimed any such intention ; the book was to be called 'Hearts of Oak.'

'Snappy,' said Hilary.

'I needn't tell you, Mr.—er—Sleath—what strange names we have, you and I ! we ought to work well together—I needn't tell you that for the first part of that period the British Mercantile Marine took a second or third place in Indian waters. All the old records are in Dutch or Portuguese. Unfortunately I don't know these languages. That's why——'

'I see,' said Hilary, helpfully. 'You've come to the right man, Mr. Murpin.' Mr. Murpin was good enough to say that he hoped so indeed.

All this is by way of preamble to explain why Hilary sat one pleasant October afternoon deciphering and translating some crabbed Dutch journals relating to the East Coast port of Ghausti. I have explained the odd nature of Hilary's education, I have mentioned a certain ingeniousness of his disposition and I have pictured him to you as ambitious, pushful and—hard up. That in turn should explain his interest when he found himself translating the following paragraphs.

'This day the English ship *Mayflower* lay in the roads. Her captain and his mate having come ashore and the weather freshening their boat was capsized in crossing the bar and the captain was drowned.'

And later—

'This day the English ship was driven ashore near the Port and wrecked.'

Hilary sat and looked at these. The actual dates were not very clear, but the journal was of the year 1651 and the first extract was certainly later than July. There might have been an interval of days between the two—say a fortnight—or there might have been over a month. The journal was very much battered and torn and pages were missing. In any case it didn't much matter; if her captain was lost on the first occasion, quite likely the ship lay off Ghausti waiting instructions. True, it didn't say that the English ship that was wrecked was 'the English ship *Mayflower*,' but it didn't say it wasn't. There wouldn't be so many English ships calling at Ghausti in 1651; the two might—nay, must—have been one.

And—the *Mayflower*! There is only one *Mayflower* in history—that in which the ancestors of all the best American families landed in New England. Hilary began reciting Mrs. Hemans under his breath. In the course of a varied career Hilary had visited America and he had some conception of the magic of that word. And here she was!

'Gosh!' said Hilary. 'If we could find that wreck—or even a few Americans. . . .'

II.

The depôt of the Indo-American Oil Syndicate at Ghausti stands on the ultimate sand-spit of that horrible and decaying town. Two mud-creeks, deep and incredibly foul, run on either side of it and it is separated from the town by the tail end of a seasonal swamp. In the hot weather this is a blur of flame, in the wet a blur of water; and through flame or water the unfortunate Agent of the Syndicate has to tramp daily. Looking landward, he sees beyond the swamp a huddle of scrawny toddy-palms, the masts of boats lying in the canal lock and the wonderful tower of the renowned Venkatramana Temple. Looking seawards, he sees a forgotten lighthouse and far, far out an anchored steamer waiting to do such business as Ghausti still can boast.

In 1651 an English ship could lie in the roads off Ghausti; only a very small ship of any nationality could do that in 1927. Those roads have silted, silted, silted; the bar has narrowed, narrowed and shoaled; the skippers of the B.I. and the Clan and the other coastwise liners curse Ghausti without stint. Almost all the Indian East Coast ports are silted and dead, but you can still get within a mile or two of some of them; with Ghausti you lie nearly ten miles off. There you roll and rock in a slow swell and a hot stillness; and you would not believe that there could be persons not ten miles off regarding you with envy.

There was one anyway. Mr. Simon Duckett, the agent of the Indo-American Oil Syndicate, never saw one of those liners lying out to sea but he cursed Ghausti with a fluency surpassing even that of the skippers. Mr. Duckett was about through with Ghausti.

Simon was not strictly speaking in the service of the Syndicate. The Syndicate had established a *depôt* at Ghausti in their early days and they had come to regard it as their one fool break. They kept a man of their own there until it became obvious that Ghausti was never going to pay his expenses, and then they removed him and looked round for a local agent. Persons looking round for anybody in Ghausti usually encountered Simon Duckett; Simon became the Syndicate's agent.

Simon Duckett was nearly, but not quite, white, and it was the non-white in him that kept him clinging limpet-like to the remains of Ghausti—as it had kept his father before him. The Ducketts had known Ghausti in its glory; there was a family legend of a great-grandfather Duckett who had driven to the band-stand (when a real band played in it) in a carriage and pair and had given champagne dinners to officers (no, not Volunteers or I.D.F.—real Army Officers). Then the silted sea had ebbed away from Ghausti and fortune had ebbed away from the Ducketts. Trade vanished, agencies were abandoned, commissions took unto themselves wings and fled. Simon's father ought to have shaken the dust of Ghausti from his feet and so should Simon; but as I have said they were not quite white. They clung to the place where once their family had been great. Simon's board carried the names of six agencies; but three of these were dead and two nominal. Only the Indo-American Oil Syndicate meant any income.

And now that was going; the last letter from the company clearly foreshadowed the closing of the Ghausti *depôt*. And when that occurred, what would become of Simon and his slightly olive-

tinted wife and his slightly coffee-tinted children who wore topis and shoes with desperate persistence ? Simon threw out his hands with a non-European gesture : ' Wha-ht to do ? '

It was in this frame of mind that Hilary found him one sunny December morning. Simon hardly knew what to make of Hilary ; no vagrants came to Ghausti—it was less trouble to commit suicide and came to much the same thing. The regular stiffs, tramps, casuals, and dead-beats kept to the main line where there were magistrates every fifty miles. Even a man looking for work would have more sense than to look for it at Ghausti. Simon asked suspiciously—

' What you want ? '

Hilary summoned up his recollections of American.

' Say bo, I got somethin' to hand to yew.'

Simon stared at him. ' Why you talk like that ? I am not an American.'

Hilary was a trifle taken aback. He had made sure that the manager of the Syndicate would be an American ; he had blessed the discovery that the Syndicate had a depôt within yards of the *Mayflower's* wreck and had made it his first point of call. Americans were essential.

' Oh well,' he said lamely, ' neither am I if you come to that. But if you're not an American I don't suppose you've ever heard of the *Mayflower*.'

But if Simon was not an American he had the advantage of a sound education as that term is understood by the Government of India. As so understood it includes the memorising of edifying poetical works. He laughed sharply.

' Oh, yes. Yes, rather. I know it all.' And he began to reel off Mrs. Hemans.

Hilary was delighted ; he grasped him by the hand.

' Say, that's great ! ' The prepared Americanisms clung to him even in that moment of stress. ' Well—that same *Mayflower's* lying out there.'

Simon discontinued his efforts to remember verse three. He looked at the tiny, far-off bulk of the B.I. steamer ; clearly his visitor did not refer to that. There was no other craft in sight except a local *masula* boat pitching drunkenly at the bar. He made an enquiring noise.

' Read these,' said Hilary, and planted his extracts from the journal on the table.

Simon humoured him and read. It appeared to him that God had sent a lunatic to divert his long, empty, and aimless morning; very good—it would pass the time. Hilary explained that these extracts were written at Chausti two hundred and fifty years ago—nearer three hundred. It didn't seem to Simon to matter if they had been written three thousand years ago, or three million, or never at all. He couldn't catch the stranger's drift.

'It's the same *Mayflower*,' said Hilary. 'Don't you see?'

'But the *Mayflower* in the poem went to America.'

'And she came back again. She wasn't built for that voyage, man—they only hired her. She came back. Nobody knows to rights what became of her. There's all sorts of stories. But there's nothing half so conclusive as this.' He slapped the extracts.

'She must have been a good ship if she crossed the Atlantic, eh? We were tradin' a lot out east just then an' they'd put a good ship on this run—the best they had. Why not the old *Mayflower*, eh? It's right enough.'

He argued on while Simon stared at him mildly; an amusing lunatic but purposeless.

'It was only a matter of twenty years—less. She'd last that much—easy. You can bet your last pair of boots on it, boy—the old Pilgrim Fathers' *Mayflower's* here beside us. Out there.'

Simon fingered the papers.

'Well, what about that?'

Hilary leaned forward impressively. 'We gotta raise her. Find her an' raise her. An' then'—he touched Simon's arm—'sell her. Bit by bit. A thousand dollars a chunk. Souvenirs. Paper-weights five hundred dollars each. Y'ever been in the States?'

Simon shook his head; he had never been anywhere.

'Ah!' said Hilary. 'You don't know 'em. *They'll* buy.'

Simon came gradually out of his dream and regarded his lunatic. Was he a lunatic? This fellow was talking about making thousands of dollars out of little bits of an old ship that was sunk somewhere out there; *that* sounded mad enough. But if it wasn't—

'Why should they buy?' he asked.

Laboriously Hilary explained just what the *Mayflower* legend meant to certain families on the Eastern seaboard of the United States. He sketched pictures of Wall Street magnates vying with one another in accumulating the holy relics. 'Nothing less'n five hundred dollars—not even a nail.' He worked it out in rupees,

estimating the *Mayflower's* cubical content at the smallest possible figure. He knew all about the *Mayflower* that was to be known; he was on sure ground there. Simon listened, impressed.

'Well,' he said at last, 'where's the ship?'

'We gotta find her,' Hilary repeated. 'She came ashore here in 1651 and she must be there yet. Wood in salt sand keeps pretty nigh for ever.'

Simon laughed the disillusioned laugh that says 'I knew there was a catch somewhere.' The man *was* a looney after all.

'You sillee ass,' he said. 'Where that ship came ashore was somewhere where we're sitting now. Or maybe right back in the swamp. There's millions and millions of tons of sand on top of all that. How you are going to find her?'

Hilary was nonplussed again. He had forgotten the interminable twistings and varyings of the treacherous East Coast. He had pictured divers working in shoal water (the Indo-American Oil Syndicate would unofficially finance these), grubbing in mere tidal deposits. That would have been manageable; but clearly one could not start to shift some square miles of solid land. The extract was hopelessly vague; 'near the Port' might be anywhere.

Simon was staring at the table, at the distressing letter from the Syndicate that lay thereon.

'Look here,' he said. 'You say these Americans will buy?'

'Buy!' Hilary was emphatic. 'They'll give their souls.'

'Then why not we *say* it is the ship? I can get you bits of ship's wood that have lain here a hundred years—more than that. Who will know? You can show your papers; they will buy.'

I am not prepared to say that something of this kind had not hovered in the back of Hilary's mind on the journey up from Madras. He looked at Simon with admiration.

'Gosh!' he said. 'You've got it.'

Simon rose to his feet; he thrust the Syndicate's communication into a drawer and locked it.

'You better come to my house now,' he said, 'and have breakfast.'

Hilary reflected with satisfaction that his fortune-finder was providing free meals already. They went out together into the hot sun.

'You can't do without me in this,' said Simon presently. 'I can't do the talk, but you will have to get bits of ships and all. That I can do. And I will not give you away. I get half?'

'Right-oh.' Hilary never haggled.

'And now, where can we find some Americans?'

'What's your old syndicate for?' said Hilary.

III.

All good Englishmen have heard of Thomas Cook and all good Americans have heard of Siegrid's Tours; most good Americans have been on at least one of them. They are something quite special. They cost three times as much as any other tours in the world, but in the unanimous opinion of Siegrid's patrons they are worth it. They are run in small and exclusive parties and are personally conducted by ladies and gentlemen whose names are familiar even to readers of the illustrated press. You may have seen some of the slogans—'Siegrid's Second Degree Touring'; 'You don't *See* a place with Siegrid's—you *Live* it'; 'Siegrid's Tours are for the Folk who've Seen Everything.' Up to these the tours certainly live.

For instance, no tour but a Siegrid tour, however exclusive or ruinous, would bear its component members to Ghausti. Yet Ghausti is an instructive and illuminating place. It teaches a salutary lesson to a young race by its cemeteries of four nations and its five hundred acres of assorted ruins. It is intensely and genuinely Indian; it contains no hotel, no European shops and not four European persons; in it you meet neither the suave hawker nor the polished Cantab nor the voluble babu, but only the dour, blockish, self-satisfied, self-contained Indian of the small up-country backwater. It is the sort of place all tourists should be taken to—but aren't. You can bait Ghausti further with the unique beauties of the Venkatramana Temple and the finest Dutch fort and second finest Dutch cemetery in the East.

Simon and Hilary had the draft of their letter to the managing director of the Syndicate written when the advent of an American gentleman with thirty-five large tents informed them of an impending Siegrid's tour. They hailed it as a God-sent opportunity and dismissed the Syndicate for ever. Simon was for putting up a notice '*Mayflower* relics sold here,' but Hilary prudently suppressed this naïve excursion into fraud. Instead he strolled round and conversed with Siegrid's agent. Hilary was all American.

'You sure run one big show here. Ain't much to see, though, in a one-horse burg like this.'

The agent spat out a glib list of the sights of Ghausti.

'Sure,' said Hilary. 'And there's the *Mayflower* relics. You ain't forgettin' them?'

The agent's hat seemed to rise on his head. 'You said *Mayflower*?'

'Sure. Didn' you know this was where she was lost?'

'What *Mayflower*?'

'Isn' but the one I ever heard of. She's right here.'

'Kin you prove it?'

'I bin in America.' Hilary's tone was aggrieved. 'I wouldn't say a thing like that 'less I *knew*. Come right now; I'll show you.'

The agent followed, chewing a piece of grass. He saw the extracts from the journal; Hilary could give him the original Dutch. He heard Hilary's persuasive arguments. He saw a number of fragments of wood—old, stone-hard, sea-bitten wood. He saw Simon, who chanced to come in—casually of course.

'This is Mr. Duckett,' said Hilary. 'His family have lived here a long time. Eh, Simon?'

'Too long,' said Simon, shuddering.

'It was them, rightly speaking, that found the ship. They bin taking bits off her for a hundred years or so. Most of them are lost. Of course they didn' know what they'd found; it wasn't till I got hold of that journal just by chance that we stumbled to it.'

'Where's the ship now, anyway?'

The agent was taking no chances.

Simon gave a well-affected laugh; it was his turn. Hilary warmed to him.

'Now you are asking, eh? That is what nobody knows. She used to lie up there'—he waved in the general direction of the swamp—'but in the big cyclone of 'ninety-four the sea came through the swamp and away she went. Where she is now I couldn't tell you. That was in my father's time; I wasn't born.' A truly well-arranged blend of truth and fiction, thought Hilary approvingly.

The agent glared at them. 'The old *Mayflower* lyin' right here an' you boobs hackin' firewood off her! Millions of dollars you've burnt. Is that all there is left?'

Simon opened his mouth to say there were tons more, but Hilary stopped him. 'There's a *little* more upstairs. But there's not much anywhere.'

The agent went, and Simon was peevish.

'Why didn't you tell him there were tons of it and then sell it to him?' he demanded.

'Simon,' said Hilary, 'this is a slow game and we've got to play carefully. We're selling nothing—remember that. We're only wanting to let folk in America hear about it—that's all the use we'll make of this Siegrid outfit. It's what you don't want to sell that folks 'll give big money for. And anyway the less there is of it the more valuable it is, see ?'

He caught Simon's eye.

'Soon as they've gone I'll get back to my job in Madras. We can afford to wait.'

Simon looked relieved ; so far the scheme had meant merely another mouth in the house to feed and Simon's dark, petulant little wife had begun to talk about it.

'Right,' he said. 'But—it's fifty-fifty.'

'Oh, sure !' said Hilary.

IV.

A fleet of hired cars decanted Siegrid's Tour at Ghausti two days later : there were only twenty tourists all told and they represented the flower of American civilisation. But for the first time in history they cold-shouldered the Venkatramana Temple and the Dutch graves—even Van Houlen's, the oldest Dutch grave in India and the resting place of an ancestor of a leading New York family. They had heard of the *Mayflower* relics and nothing else would content them. The ancestral house of the Ducketts was besieged.

Before this array of culture and intellect Simon gave way. He had sent his wife and family away to spend the day with an aunt and now he heartily wished he had joined them. He could keep up his end with Siegrid's agent, bluffing away on a story Hilary had prepared for him ; but this galaxy of keen-eyed, rapier-witted gentlemen—and worse still, ladies—was too much for him. He didn't trust Hilary but he had to back out or break down. Wisely, he backed.

Hilary held the fort and stood fire for about three hours. There was one man there who knew every known historical detail about the *Mayflower* ; but he didn't know more than Hilary. He insisted that the *Mayflower* never went home from America—but he couldn't prove it and Hilary could very nearly prove that she did. There was another man who had the history of all navigation at his fingers' ends ; but Hilary had it too. And there was an infernally troublesome woman.

'Why have you only got pieces of wood?' she asked. 'There must have been a compass, firearms, all sorts of things. What became of all of them?'

Hilary was stumped for a moment, but only for a moment.

'There were,' he said with a sad smile. 'I thought you'd ask that. There were two small cannons, but they've buried themselves in the swamp. You'd find them, I daresay, by digging, but it would take a long, long time. We don't know *quite* where she lay. All the small, interesting things were brought here; but one night this place was sacked by pirates. You've heard of the Bengal pirates?'

One of them 'seemed to remember something.' Hilary blessed him.

'Well, they cleaned this house out from roof to veranda. The *Mayflower* things went then. That was in Mr. Duckett's great-grandfather's time.'

'They wouldn't have been things that belonged to the Fathers anyhow,' said somebody. 'The ship herself's more interestin' to me.' The danger blew over.

When they had asked all possible questions and poked and thumbed not only the *Mayflower* timbers but half the bric-à-brac in the Duckett house, Hilary made them his little speech. It was a carefully prepared production and he delivered it creditably.

He said he was aware of the magnitude of the discovery he and his friend had been lucky enough to make—not so much to themselves as to America. Well, these things had been found and kept by his friend's family and his friend had a right to sell.

A stoutish, grey-headed, razor-eyed man in the corner said something about treasure-trove going to the State. Another demurred; Duckett's family had held unchallenged possession for a century.

'Anyhow, it wouldn't be *your* State,' said Hilary adroitly. 'It would be England.'

'Better forget that State of yours, Mr. Keoghan,' said someone. The grey-headed man bowed smilingly and Hilary went ahead.

'My friend Simon has entrusted me with looking after this end of the business. Now I'm an ignorant sort of fellow——'

'Not so very,' said the man who had argued on the *Mayflower's* history, and the navigation expert gave a confirmatory grunt.

'I've no knowledge of business at any rate.' Hilary smiled

his amiable, weak-eyed smile. He proceeded to explain that he would ask one of the gentlemen to take some specimens of the wood to America, have the case thoroughly investigated and obtain an opinion on values. Then, perhaps, if all turned out well he and his friend might make a little. . . .

'A little!' It was the troublesome lady—and as near a snort as an American lady could come.

Hilary finished with compliments. 'It's been a real stroke of luck to us to have such people as yourselves come here. We've been sitting on this for a long time not knowing what to do. Now we feel safe. Now who'll take the specimens?'

There was a silence; then the grey-headed man said suddenly 'I will.'

They buzzed like bees. 'Didn't know you were interested in the *Mayflower*, Mr. Keoghan.'

The big man laughed. 'I'm not: that's why I'm the right man for this. Wouldn't trust the rest of you.'

They drifted out among laughter, poking and thumbing to the last. Hilary sat down and filled a pipe and poured himself a very stiff peg. He foresaw trouble with Simon, whose motto was 'quick returns,' but there had been no other game worth playing. 'We might have sold the stuff on the nail for something small,' Hilary thought, 'or we might not. But if they pass it O.K. over there it's a fortune. And they will. There's always some boob who'll believe.'

He was convinced of it when, going out in the dusk to look for Simon, he met instead a little, goat-bearded man dodging and skulking in the garden. The little man (whom he had seen before that afternoon) first avoided him and then approached.

'Say, mister——'

'Sleath.'

'Oh, thankye. Say, Mr. Sleath, couldn't you sell me a bit of that stuff now. Right now; cash down. Just a morsel.'

Hilary rubbed his chin, pondering the question.

'Maybe, just a souvenir——'

'Yes, yes.' The little man was eager. 'Just a souvenir. The smallest bit. Just seeing we're here.'

'It's hardly fair to the others. You'll have to keep it dead quiet.'

'Trust me, sir. I'll be like the eternal grave.'

'We-ell, then; come in quietly.'

Simon brought home his family half an hour later. Hilary met him on the doorstep.

'Go 'n hide upstairs, all of you. Fish rising.'

'Business?' Simon was eager.

'Paperweights,' said Hilary cryptically. 'One already. There'll be more. You hide.'

Hilary's psychology was sound. Another customer crept in that night; and very early next morning there came three more—secretly, stealthily, separately. One was the navigation expert and one was the troublesome lady.

But Mr. Keoghan was not among them.

V.

In the afternoon a menial in Siegrid's livery brought Hilary a chit.

'Step over to our camp for a few minutes this evening.—J. KEOGHAN.'

'He doesn't say "please,"' said Simon peevishly.

'He doesn't,' said Hilary, 'and I don't think he feels like "please," either. I don't altogether like this.'

'Don't go, then,' said Simon, quaking.

'I'll go,' said Hilary, 'or we'll have him over here. I know that kind. Maybe it's nothing.'

Hilary went slowly over to where the fleet of tents decorated the unpleasing wastes of the swamp and was received by Keoghan in an apartment Siegrid's had made so luxurious that it was difficult to realise it was built only of canvas. The grey-headed American with the eagle eyes was seated at a writing-table smoking a black cigar: a drink stood at his elbow, and he poured a generous one for Hilary.

'Praise the Lord,' he said, 'there's no law of prohibition in this country—yet.'

Hilary drank; for all his weak blue eyes he was no beater of bushes, and he fired a shot in reply.

'You always seem to be talking about the law,' he said. 'It was treasure-trove the other day.'

'I've made a study of the law,' said Keoghan. 'It's a darned silly thing at times, but breaking it's a mug's game too.'

Hilary wriggled. 'You're a lawyer, maybe, yourself.'

'Nope; nor a judge either. I'm a merchant. . . . But say,

this is a wonderful thing you've given me.' He fished among the remains of a tumbled newspaper and drew out the *Mayflower* relic.

Hilary drank again. 'It sure is.'

The old man smoked at his cigar. 'I don't get all this *Mayflower* business; maybe my law's better'n my history. If I'm to handle this proposition you'd better put me wise a bit.'

Hilary drew a breath; so this was all—the old chap only wanted to mug up a bit of second-hand *Mayflower* history. What a conscience a little bit of law-breaking did give one!

He plunged into the history of the *Mayflower*; told all he knew of it, all he knew of contemporary ship-building. It was no small recital, but the old man smoked on placidly.

'And that's a bit of that same ship,' he said at last. 'Well, well!'

'It can't be anything else.' Hilary had recovered himself.

'Built at Plymouth, was she?'

'She was.'

'Oak?'

'British oak.'

Keoghan took the relic in his hand as if he loved it.

'By gosh!' he said, 'that British oak was the stuff. They didn't meet much like it our side of the water.'

'They did not,' said Hilary; 'there's an old buffer in Madras—I'm a sort of secretary of his—he's writing a book all about it. "Hearts of Oak," he calls it.'

'He couldn't do better.' Old Keoghan spoke admiringly. 'Hearts of Oak; a fine name and a fine thing. Ah, I wish I could write books. But, as I told you, I'm a merchant.' His voice changed ever so slightly, yet unmistakably. 'A timber merchant.'

To Hilary's eyes—those weak, blue, give-away eyes—the *Mayflower* relic seemed to be unaccountably swelling to enormous dimensions. Old Keoghan looked with his terrible stare first at Hilary and then at the thing in his hand. He threw the lump of wood on the table.

'Son,' he said, 'that's teak.'

VI.

'He had a microscope slide of it,' said Hilary presently to Simon. 'He showed me it all and how he knew it was teak.'

Why in thunder, you silly mug, did you give me a bit of *teak*, of all things on earth? Any other wood might have done—pine, hemlock, anything. But whoever saw *teak* at Plymouth in the 'sixteens?'

'What did he say?' Simon was openly shivering.

'He told me to beat it back to my job in Madras and quit sitting in a game like this. Then I said we'd sold some of the stuff already.'

'You told him that!' Simon's eyes rounded with horror.

'He'd have found it out if I hadn't. He doesn't miss much, that one. I told him what we'd sold and who to. All exact. And he said "The darn skunks, it serves them darn well right. You better keep that and give it to the poor. Now beat it, son." That's all he said.'

'And what will you do?'

'I'll beat it to-morrow and get on with the Hearts of Oak.'

Simon thought of the Syndicate's letter; he cleared his throat for a lie.

'I think we will come up to Madras, too. I am stagnating here. I'm thrown away. This place is dead. Keep your eyes open for a job for me—a decent one.'

'Right oh!' said Hilary obligingly. 'I can pull a string or two there all right. I'll get you something decent. Easy as easy!'

They were good bluffers, were Hilary and Simon, but they were not the only bluffers in Ghausti. For no farther off than that unpleasant swamp a grey-headed man stood in a luxuriously appointed tent and looked from his left hand to his right. In the first there was a block of greyish wood and in the second a microscope slide. His keen eyes shone.

'I guess it is *teak*,' he said to himself. 'Nine bits of ship's wood out of every ten they'd pick up here would be. Anyway he fell for it. And, anyway, it isn't *Mayflower*.'

He slid his thumb from the label of the microscope slide in his other hand and read there in neat print 'Himalayan Fir.'

Mr. Keoghan chuckled.

HILTON BROWN.

MODERN EGYPT : EVERY MAN'S LAND.

BY IAN HAY.

FOR those Britons who feel constrained, when winter comes, to leave comfortable homes and reliable cooks in South Kensington or Worcestershire in order to sample the dubious delights of the Riviera or Switzerland, it is not a bad plan, before paying the decisive visit to the passport office, to pause and inquire : 'Are there no other places ?' To such, especially if they be too old to indulge in Alpine sports or too wise to play *chemin de fer*, the new Egypt is respectfully recommended.

To get to Cairo to-day is on the whole a less irksome business than to get to Cannes or St. Moritz. It takes longer, but you have fewer changes to make, fewer *douanes* to weather, and fewer elbows to avoid.

You may travel to Egypt direct by east-bound liner from Tilbury, or you may intercept that same liner at a Mediterranean port, or you may travel overland to Trieste and proceed to Alexandria by Italian steamer. The second of these courses strikes the happy mean. It will not deliver you from the passage of the English Channel, but after that outrage has been endured the usual asperities of Continental travel are surprisingly mitigated. The Customs, for instance ; so long as you do not propose to unpack your profane trunk upon the sacred soil of France, the French authorities will treat you with comparative humanity. They will rattle you from Calais to Marseilles with your baggage untouched, and having delivered you there, covered with grit, will wash their hands of you—a privilege usually denied to yourself until you find yourself in your cabin on the ship.

What can Egypt offer to the holiday-maker that the Alps and the Midi can not ? Or, to put it in plain Anglo-Saxon, what holiday horrors can you escape in Africa which are inevitable in Europe ?

Consider briefly the most potent deterrents to foreign adventure.

The unfamiliar climate. The incomprehensible language. The mysterious food. The rocketing rate of exchange. Above all, the hotel proprietor, with his attendant parasites.

In modern Egypt none of these afflictions are greater than in Europe, and some are sensibly less. The climate is sunny and bracing, though care must be taken at night. As for the language, the sound old rule that if you speak English loud enough and long enough you can make yourself understood anywhere on the face of the globe holds good here as elsewhere. This is just as well, for Egypt is a land of many tongues. The telephone girl at one of the great hotels of Cairo can speak at least four languages fluently, and at a Cairene cinema entertainment which I once patronised the explanatory captions were thrown on to the screen in French, English, Arabic, Greek, and Italian! True, these left something to be desired in the matter of idiom and synchronisation—the English caption, coming last, never by any chance fitted the scene which was being enacted at the time—but they at least indicated a hospitable determination on the part of the Egyptians to be all things to all men.

In Egypt, too, the currency difficulty does not arise. The Egyptian pound is quite stable, with practically the same value as the English pound, and five of the hundred piastres into which it is divided make an admirable substitute for a shilling. But actual buying and selling are not such simple matters. Nothing in Egypt, except railway tickets and hotel accommodation, appears to have any fixed price. An article is worth exactly what you can get for it—though not always what you pay for it. Consequently the gradual bridging of the gulf between what he has demanded and what he expects to get is a matter which occupies most of the Egyptian salesman's working day. He enjoys the exercise hugely, and here he has the advantage of the impatient and self-conscious Briton: self-conscious, because the Egyptian has an incurable passion for conducting his business in the street, and will follow you for half a mile with a Persian hearth-rug or a bead necklace, chanting: 'Five pound—four pound—five dollar—ten bob!'—until in sheer desperation you hand him all your spare change and slink miserably down the nearest turning, the dejected possessor of something which you could have bought much more quickly and cheaply in Birmingham.

The mention of small change brings us to the considerable question of backsheesh. Backsheesh has more breadth than depth: that is to say, you are expected to tip a great many persons, but none of these expect very much, except possibly some head-waiter or hall-porter with lamentably European ideas. Roughly speaking, there are three classes of person who expect backsheesh. Firstly, the individual who has performed for you some actual service, such as conveying your bag from a train to a cab; secondly, as many friends and relations of his as he can muster before you succeed in driving away; thirdly, total strangers who happen to be passing at the time, and join the mob on the off-chance. Fortunately these gentry are quite humble-minded as to the amount bestowed, but everybody likes to have something. It is no use dropping a twenty-piastre piece into the nearest palm, and saying 'Partagez ça!' If you do, there will probably be a riot, and certainly an outcry in comparison with which community singing becomes a mere whispering chorus.

Cairo to-day is a curious mixture of Paris, Palm Beach, and the unchanging East. The public buildings and hotels are distinctly French. The great blocks of white, airy, balconied flats which are rising everywhere suggest Florida in the height of its recent boom. A stone's-throw from all this is the Muski, the bazaar quarter, where the streets are too narrow for vehicles, and in many cases are roofed; where shops are mere holes in the wall, with the proprietor sitting on the floor surrounded by his wares, and a surging tide of humanity jostles and shouts and quarrels and jests from dawn till dusk.

Trams run all over the city—trams open on either side, with voluminously robed humanity not only occupying the seats but massed on the running-boards as well. Whenever a tram stops, this humanity drops off into the road in large clusters, and passing motor-drivers jam down both feet and call despairingly upon Allah. To steer any vehicle in Cairo calls for a combination of dexterity and callousness which is usually only found in the Parisian cab-driver. The Egyptian is not a quick mover. A man who wears his nightshirt not only by night but by day—and a very long nightshirt at that—is not at his best when riding a bicycle or

evading a charabanc. There are plenty of both. The bicycles are usually ridden on the wrong side of the road. The charabanc rattles in from outlying districts, closely curtained and crammed full, swaying topheavily upon a decrepit Ford chassis and stopping for nothing except the policeman who nowadays controls the traffic, London fashion, at street-crossings. These traffic policemen are largely English, and very smart they look in white uniform and red tarboosh.

Few Egyptian women are seen in the streets, at least in national costume. Not that the costume has been abandoned, as in Constantinople. The average Egyptian woman still swathes herself from head to foot in nun-like black, with a black veil, through which can be seen a curious little gilded cylinder worn down the bridge of the nose. (This cylinder is a model of the Nilometer, the ancient device for recording the height of the Nile.) When a dozen of these ladies come to town on a marketing expedition they present an alarming appearance. They look like a plague of widows : they would have frightened the elder Weller badly. They sit packed together on a species of two-wheel lorry, which also accommodates a male driver, humped well over the shafts in front, and a considerable quantity of baggage heaped up behind. Needless to say, the entire conveyance is drawn by one diminutive donkey. The fare is only one millime—rather less than a farthing—but it is doubtful if this economic triumph is of any real interest to the donkey.

The Egyptian has the Frenchman's fondness for the street. As already noted, he likes to sell things there. Between Shepheard's Hotel and the Continental, perhaps a distance of a quarter of a mile, the pavement is thronged with persons who are prepared at any hour of the day or night to sell you a Turkey carpet, a picture postcard, a walking-stick, an amber necklace, a hundred cigarettes, a lottery ticket, a glass of lemonade, or an obsolete copy of any English newspaper, all at a price to be fixed solely by a process of mutual recrimination. The Egyptian likes to sit outside cafes, making one small drink go as far as possible and arguing with his friends and relations. He likes to drop into his hatter's—and a Cairo hatter's establishment is a mere open recess in the street—to have his tarboosh steamed and pressed by an intriguing apparatus of brass. He likes to have his boots cleaned in public : the streets swarm with small boys whose lives are dedicated to this service.

If you stop in the middle of a throng to converse with a friend, you will presently be conscious, as often as not, of a tickling sensation in the neighbourhood of your toes, and you will discover that one of these enterprising infants has begun to improve the shining hour at your expense.

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The social life of Cairo is delightful. The sun shines all day and every day, and open-air fixtures can be made with the comforting certainty that they will not be spoiled by the weather. Official society centres round the Residency and the house of the Commander-in-Chief, each of which establishments dispenses most charming hospitality. There is a considerable civil community, mainly legal and diplomatic, and there is, of course, that perennial fountain-head of entertainment and good fellowship, the British Regimental Mess.

There is abundant night life, though it is of a much less lurid description than formerly. There is the Opera; there are dinner-parties; and of course there is dancing. Each of the great hotels and restaurants has a special night of its own upon which all the world may dine and sup beneath its roof and perform experiments in the latest form of knee-knocking contortion. The rendezvous on Wednesday is the Semiramis; on Saturday Shepheard's; and on certain other nights you may disport yourself at the establishment of an enterprising Italian named Groppi, who specialises in particular nights for particular nationalities. *Tout s'arrange*: there are even nights in the week when you are graciously permitted to stay at home and go to bed.

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The British colony reside for the most part upon the green island of Gezireh, which lies in the Nile, between Cairo on the one side and Mena and the Pyramids on the other. Over the greater part of Gezireh stretch the grounds of the far-famed Sporting Club, which is conducted very largely on the lines of an American Country Club. Here you may lunch and dine, play polo, tennis, golf, cricket, watch racing, or merely enjoy the society of the fair—and the fair in Cairo are both numerous and outstanding. Tea-time is a particularly busy period.

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Golf at Gezireh offers a rare and refreshing experience to the man from home who is accustomed to pay a caddie-fee of half a crown a round (with an unearned gratuity thrown in) to a lackadaisical dole-drawer in uncertain control of his diaphragm. The caddies at Gezireh are all small boys: they sit in a long row on a bench under a tree outside the professional's shop, supervised by an elderly gentleman in a crinoline, and looking quite incredibly virtuous. But their virtue is more than skin-deep. They are friendly, efficient, and keen on the game. They receive two piastres per round, and are entitled to a tip of the same dimensions; which brings your total expenses up to something under tenpence.

The greens are yellow, being composed of sand. They are circular, like a miniature circus ring, and the hole is in the exact centre, in an almost imperceptible crater; so your ball, if not hit too strongly, has a pleasant and flattering habit of curling round and rolling lazily in at the side, or even the back, of the hole. A small boy with a long squeegee-like broom resides permanently in the neighbourhood of each green, and as soon as you have holed out he sprinkles the green with water and then races round it, towing his squeegee in decreasing circles; and in an instant all is swept and garnished for the next couple. Small boys are plentiful in Egypt: they are almost the only Egyptians who always seem to be doing something.

But Cairo is not Egypt. 'The Nile is Egypt, and Egypt is the Nile'; and King Tutankhamen has given a fresh lease of fame to the Nile Valley in general and Luxor in particular. Luxor can now be reached in a single night, in a luxurious sleeper. Or if time is no object, you may travel by water upon one of Cook's extremely comfortable steamers. On the opposite side of the river from Luxor lies the historic Valley of the Kings. You cross from Luxor in a boat—an ancient sailing-boat equipped, oddly enough, with a most modern-looking centre-board. Your dragoman will assure you that the centre-board is an Egyptian institution of immemorial antiquity, but the true story is different. Many years ago an English traveller—his name was Wellcome—brought an English centre-board sailing-boat as far up the Nile as Aswan, and the type was so suited to the great, shallow, shifting river

that it was soon adopted everywhere. In due course it made its appearance in Luxor, and Luxor now firmly believes that the centre-board is a legacy from the days of Karnak and Thebes.

Having landed on the left bank of the river, amid the usual babel, you drive for five or six miles across the irrigated chess-board of green patches which forms an Egyptian landscape, until you reach the brown range of mountains which mark the western boundary of the Nile Valley. Egypt is a brown land. The mountains which fringe it are brown; the Nile mud which covers it is brown; the people are brown, and so are the houses in which they live; for the bricks, being sun-dried, preserve the colour of the mud of which they were made. The desert itself is more brown than yellow.

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Now you plunge into a brown rocky gorge, out of which the roc might have plucked Sinbad the Sailor, and presently you are in the Valley of the Kings, an unexpectedly populous spot. Camels, donkeys, two-horsed landaus, even dilapidated cars; dragomans, donkey-boys, tourists. The tourists come sometimes in small and haughty parties of two or three, with their own private dragoman: more often they come in conducted companies of fifteen or twenty. These are usually English, or French, or German. (A prejudiced Briton might say that there are altogether too many Germans in Egypt.) But when they come in battalions, they are Americans. All during the spring great ocean liners from New York, filling in an otherwise idle winter by a Mediterranean cruise, or a world tour, are calling at Alexandria. From each of these emerge a host, some three or four hundred strong, armed with guide books, cameras, sun-helmets, and fly-whisks, prepared and determined, with the characteristic enterprise of their race, to master the geography of Egypt and the history of its twenty-six dynasties within a space of ninety-six hours. And to be just, they contrive to see a surprising lot in the time.

They are of all types—business men and their families from some great city of the Atlantic seaboard; elderly and erudite ladies from Boston; or perhaps a couple of hundred students, of both sexes, from some Far Western University. They have got up

their subject methodically and conscientiously before landing: they know exactly what they want to see, and they see it. Sometimes they go so far as to correct their dragomans' dates or topography—an easy, but none the less courageous feat.

The centre of attraction to-day is of course the tomb of Tutankhamen. It is surrounded by other tombs, long ago discovered and cleared. It seems strange that this particular treasure-house should have lain hidden for so many centuries, considering the extreme enterprise of the ancient tomb-riflers. Only one other tomb in the whole valley—that of Amenhotep II—has escaped their attentions.

To enter Tutankhamen's tomb is to recall irresistible memories of Wembley Exhibition, or even of Madame Tussaud's. The rock-passage leading to the chamber is carpeted with drugget, and there is a wooden handrail running down the middle, to separate those entering from those emerging. The passage and tomb are lit by electric light, and only a limited number of visitors are admitted at a time. There is not exactly a turnstile at the entrance, but there is everything else. Your walking-stick is taken from you, as at the Royal Academy, and persons with Kodaks receive short shrift. The tomb is only open upon certain days of the week, for Mr. Howard Carter is still working in the chamber beyond.

Tutankhamen himself has been removed to the Cairo Museum, together with the inner shell of his coffin and most of his personal effects; but his outer mummy-case reposes in the tomb, surrounded by a rail and strongly illuminated by an arc-light. It has lain there for more than three thousand years, but the gold and enamel might have been laid on yesterday.

Some of the neighbouring tombs are more interesting, and much larger. The Pharaohs appear to have devoted most of their lives to digging their own graves—or at least making other people dig them—and as Tutankhamen died a comparatively young man, his last resting-place suffers by comparison with those of some of his longer-lived brethren. The largest tomb is that of Seti I, who, if mere size goes for anything, must have died a centenarian at least.

Perhaps the most memorable of all is the tomb of Thothmes III, of the Eighteenth Dynasty—'a little man with a big nose.' His name means nothing now, but he was the greatest conqueror the world ever saw, with the exception of Alexander and Napoleon. In his day he subjugated and ruled the whole known earth from Mesopotamia to Central Africa. Until his seventy-seventh year it was his custom every spring to leave his capital of Thebes at the head of an army, and traverse his vast dominions, holding court here, punishing there, and extending his borders all the time. He was brought up by his stepmother, a notable lady. She was also his mother-in-law—a formidable combination. Her name was Hatshepsut, and she was the Queen Elizabeth of her time. Besides bringing Thothmes up, she held him down, with an iron hand, and Thothmes never forgave her. All over Egypt to-day you will find the usual effigies, statues, and other records of the great Queen; and every single one of them has been methodically chipped and obliterated out of recognition, over every inch of its surface, by her successor. It must have been a labour of years to do the thing so thoroughly, but Thothmes evidently regarded it as a labour of love. Human nature does not seem to have altered much in the last three or four thousand years.

This Thothmes, by the way, erected at Karnak an obelisk to commemorate his third jubilee. That obelisk now stands on the Thames Embankment, and Londoners call it Cleopatra's Needle. They might as well call the Coronation Stone in the Abbey the Albert Memorial.

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In another part of the Valley further excavation is in progress. You will see hundreds of labourers at work, including a very large proportion of small boys and girls; and they work, quite literally, like ants—that is to say, in a long, straggling, ever-moving line. Each human ant carries a very small basket, and when he arrives at the point of excavation he shovels this full with his hands and passes on to the end of a distant 'tip,' where he shoots his rubbish and circles round to the hillside again. Everybody seems to be singing or shouting. And no wonder: even towards the end of the nineteenth century Egyptian labour was forced labour, under the grinding system of the *corvée*. Now all work voluntarily, and all are paid. Moreover, in this sunny land vocal accompaniment

appears to be inseparable from all forms of manual labour. Men sing rhythmically as they row a boat, or scrub the deck of a steamer. The greater the task, the louder the noise. I was once privileged to watch a small army of Egyptian porters—Egypt follows the precedent of our own Civil Service in apportioning labour in the ratio of about five men to one man's job—moving a grand piano from a lorry into a shop in a street in Cairo. Since then I have always wished that I could have heard the Pyramids being built.

But however lustily they may sing, however fiercely they may argue, these excavators keep their eyes open. At any moment some priceless scarab, or even the stonework of some long-buried tomb, may reveal itself, and the first to notify the discovery receives a quite dazzling reward. The boy who uncovered the first step leading down to Tutankhamen's tomb is now a gentleman of means—and probably of leisure.

A few hours further by train, and you are at Aswan, the site of the mighty Dam which holds back the waters of the Upper Nile, and has converted a spacious valley into one vast reservoir, containing the life-blood of Egypt. There is a road along the top of the Dam, over twenty feet wide. If you walk half-way across and lean over the parapet and gaze down at the waters leaping from the great sluices far below—there are a hundred and eighty of them—you cannot but feel that if in the Elysian Fields the man who designed the Aswan Dam should ever encounter the man who reared the Pyramid of Cheops, neither of these giants need be ashamed to salute the other as an equal, or to shake hands across the ages.

The most noticeable feature of Egypt of to-day is its profound tranquillity. It has had its troubles, like the rest of us—some of them quite recently—but there is no outward sign now of restlessness or disaffection. Egypt has been delivered from Turkey and given back to the Egyptian. She has her own monarch, her own parliament, her own army. There are British troops in the country, to guard the Canal and maintain liaison with the Sudan, but ostentatious parade of these is studiously avoided. The officers seldom appear except in mufti, and the bearing of the rank and file when

walking out is at once a pleasure and a credit. The British Tommy is the most successful propagandist we have. The police force in the larger cities is under British control, but throughout the length of the rest of the land—Egypt has no distinguishable breadth—law and order is maintained by Egyptians themselves.

Of course the Bolshevik and his poison-gas have penetrated even into this land of sun and sand. His presence is chiefly denoted by certain youthful simmerings in a small section of the great Moslem University there. But the community as a whole is 'wise' to him. Quite recently the Egyptian parliament pointed out to that peripatetic altruist, Mr. Saklatvala, the unsuitability of Egypt as an intermediate stop between London and Bombay; and Mr. Saklatvala passed by.

Still, to accept a situation is not always to welcome it. Down in his heart, what does the modern Egyptian think of it all—of the people who have set his house in order for him? He treats us with the immemorial courtesy of his race; but does he like us? Who can say—least of all a mere transient seeker after rest and sunshine? Egypt is a land of sphinxes.

But outwardly the average Egyptian seems contented enough. Egypt for the Egyptians is a slogan which seems to make small appeal to him. He is not a hustler; he is not ambitious, and he does not seem to resent being elbowed aside by more strenuous folk. It is true that in the streets of Cairo you will observe a certain number of prosperous-looking gentlemen, in frock-coats and tarbooshes, driving about in Hispano-Suiza cars. These are successful native merchants and cotton magnates. But there are others, in other cars—mainly English and French—quite as numerous and equally successful. And below that grade the supersession of the native Egyptian is patent to all. The hotels and restaurants of Cairo are run by Italians or Germans, but most of the small tradesmen appear to be Greeks. The cigarette industry, too, if names go for anything, is in Greek hands entirely.

The Egyptian intellectual deplures all this, of course. He is not in the least grateful to us for what we have done for Egypt—and we have done marvels—for he feels, humanly enough, that he could have done it all very much better himself. But the average descendant of the Pharaohs does not seem to mind. Not that he

adapts himself to progress or welcomes change. Five thousand years ago he invented a ramshackle mechanism, consisting of an earthen pot at the end of a pivoted pole, for lifting water out of the Nile and raising it to the level of the surrounding fields. He is using it still. From Cairo to Khartum to-day you probably will not be able to count half a dozen modern irrigation plants; but you will see a *shaduf*, as it is called—or a graduated series of *shadufs*, where the river bank is high—every few hundred yards.

The truth seems to be that the average Egyptian is too easy-going, too indolent, to concern himself overmuch with changes or innovations instituted by others. He enjoys an infinite capacity for sitting still and looking on. When he gets tired of sitting still, he lies down, wherever he happens to be—often upon the pavement of a crowded street—and goes to sleep. The sun is warm, the sky is blue, and his personal wants are small. The present regime ensures him cheap food, cheap transport, and an unprecedented measure of protection from injustice. Why worry about self-determination and other imported nuisances? So he rolls over in his blanket, and slumbers in the shadow—the shadow of forty centuries.

AUSTIN DOBSON : SOME LETTERS FROM
HIS FRIENDS.

BY ALBAN DOBSON.

III. 1885-1893.

'These to his Memory. May the Age arriving
As Ours recall
That bravest heart, that gay and gallant striving,
That laurelled pall !

Blithe and rare spirit ! we who later linger
By bleaker seas,
Sigh for the touch of the Magician's finger,—
His golden keys.'

No collection of letters from the writers of the period with which this paper deals would be complete without the inclusion of one from Robert Louis Stevenson, to whom the above *In Memoriam* lines were written by my father in 1901. The letter which I am about to quote has of course already appeared among the published letters of that author. It is undated, but with his usual care my father has preserved the envelope, which is dated February 26, 1885.

'Set down my delay to your own fault ; I wished to acknowledge such a gift from you in some inapt and slovenly rhymes ; but you should have sent me your pen and not your desk. The verses stand up to the axles in a miry cross road, whence the coursers of the sun shall never draw them ; hence I am constrained to this uncourtliness, that I must appear before one of the Kings of that country of rhyme without my singing robes. For less than this, if we may trust the book of Esther, favourites have tasted death ; but I conceive the Kingdom of the Muses milder mannered ; and in particular that country which you administer and which I seem to see as a half suburban land ; a land of hollyhocks and country houses ; a land where at night, in thorny and sequestered by paths, you will meet masqueraders going to a ball in their sedans, and the rector steering homeward by the light of his lantern ; a land of the windmill, and the west wind, and the flowering hawthorn with a little scented letter in the hollow of its trunk, and the kites flying over all in the season of kites, and the far away blue spires of a cathedral city. Will you forgive me, then, for my delay and accept

my thanks not only for your present, but for the letter which followed it, and which perhaps I more particularly value, and believe me to be with much admiration . . .'

So apt a pen-picture calls for no comment, but I need hardly say how much my father admired the work of R. L. S., and who does not ?

As I have indicated elsewhere, the year 1885 saw the appearance of the volume of poems entitled 'At the Sign of the Lyre,' first in America, and later, in a somewhat varied form, in England. On March 15, 1885, E. C. Stedman, to whom the volume was dedicated with some prefatory lines, wrote :

'The first tap "At the Sign of the Lyre" was drawn for me, and on the day before the public opening,—by which you readily will conceive that on the 13th instant, an advance copy of your book was sent to me, and that yesterday the *vulgus nobile aut ignobile* had their common chance to test your view. And you have given me a delightful surprise, not an inkling of your intent had reached me,—in fact, I have not learned who has overlooked (if anybody) your proofs, or otherwise helped the book through the press. The sudden titillation which my nerves of *feeling* experienced, as I read your votive inscription, was—as I promptly wrote Holt ¹—almost the first pleasant sensation I have had, during a season of prolonged trouble, anxiety and overwork. It was, indeed, a thrill of pleasure,—excited by a sense of your fidelity to an early friend, and equally by a sense of the honor done me by this open expression of it. An honor it will be justly esteemed, by readers young or old, and there is no other living poet whose reputation and friendship combined could enable him to give me quite so much satisfaction as I find in the verses with which you consign your "pinnacle."

'Not that I was, through any need of yours, the Palinurus of your first voyage. I was merely the conventional harbor-pilot ² of a craft for which there was a wide channel and a welcoming port. And, after all, the greatest favor you have done me is that you have gone on from year to year, a *poet* to the end as you were at the outset, and constantly adding to the laurels which I had the common sense to acknowledge were your due.

'I will not delay this letter a single day, and so have little to say of the book itself. I see that the *arrangement* is capital and that I am acquainted with very many of the poems. Am glad you begin with Phyllida ³ who alone would "carry" the book

¹ The publisher of the volume in question.

² Mr. Stedman is here alluding to the fact that he provided a Preface for the American edition of *Vignettes in Rhyme*, the first volume of Austin Dobson's verses to appear in America.

³ The poem entitled 'The Ladies of St. James's.'

if it bore the name of an unknown poet. By the way, you are the first to revive in your *Carmina Votiva* the Horatian usage of inscribing verse, not *directly* personal, to a friend who is *generally* associated with the theme. There is an antique grace in the practice. The Burbadge rondeau is one of the best. My wife sends her love and is even more touched than I am. You are a dear good fellow, Dobson, and "not unmindful."

As the prefatory lines to which the writer refers were not reprinted in Austin Dobson's 'Complete Poetical Works,' I venture to reproduce them here:

'No need to-day that we commend
This pinnacle to your care, O Friend!
You steered the bark that went before
Between the whirlpool and the shore;
So,—though we want no pilot now,—
We write your name upon the prow.'

Mr. Stedman's wonder as to who had overlooked the proofs is answered by the following extract from a letter from Brander Matthews, dated January 20, 1885:

'I have read about 99 pp. proof of "At the Sign of the Lyre" and so has Bunner.¹ We are doing our best to get it absolutely "fallow copy." I have read and re-read "Phyllida, My Phyllida,"² and "Hey, Dolly"³ with increased delight. You never did anything better.'

The next letter I quote, from Col. F. C. Grant, apparently refers to the English edition of 'At the Sign of the Lyre,' which had evidently made its appearance by the date of this letter, October 12, 1885:

'I really am most grateful to you for your welcome volume of poems. I have been reading them this afternoon. Some of them of course are old friends but I was glad to see them again, and many of the new ones I like very much. The poems are a curious combination of true poetic spirit and an exquisite neatness—set off sometimes with much grace and felicity of language. I shall value the Vol. "The Two Sermons" of course brought to my mind the lines of Longfellow:

"Long was the old man's sermon
But it seemed not long to me
For he spoke of Ruth the beautiful,
And then I thought of thee."

¹ H. C. Bunner.

² 'The Ladies of St. James's.'

³ 'The Milkmaid.'

There is not really much resemblance. The epithet "*autumn yellowing elms*" has been used by Tennyson,

"And slowing down the autumn yellowing aisles,
And solitary passes of the wood, rode Tristram
Towards Lyonesse and the West."

Oh! how pleased I was to get home this afternoon and see my friends.

'The 10,000 Greeks were not more delighted when they saw the blue sea—The Israelites were not more joyful when they got to the promised land than was I when I saw my armchair and my books.'

The reference to Lord Tennyson is interesting. I think my father knew Tennyson's poems well, and was always very much flattered by the latter's opinions on his verse, conveyed to him by Mr. Frederick Locker. I was not, however, aware that the two had ever met, until Sir Edmund Gosse read to me recently, from one of his notebooks, an account of a dinner at the house of Lord de Tabley, then Mr. J. Leicester Warren, where Lord Tennyson, Edmund Gosse, and my father were all present.

As practically all the letters I have so far quoted have dealt with my father's poetry, I am almost constrained to include the next—from Sir Leslie Stephen, because, by way of a change, it deals with a prose work, 'Selections from Steele,' which my father edited for the Clarendon Press. It is dated October 16, 1885:

'I received with great pleasure your volume of Steele; and am still more pleased to hear of your approaching volume. I always wanted to find a good account of Steele; and Forster, somehow, always rubs me the wrong way. Do you know Mr. Dykes Campbell who printed Addison's rough copy of Spectators? He told me a little time ago that some one¹ had been spending a good deal of time upon Steele. The some one was certainly not you, but you probably know who it was. If you don't, it might be worth while to ask Mr. C.

'I shall be curious to see your account of the Addison row. When I read the papers the other day, there seemed to be some unpleasant allusions which I did not understand, which would account for some of the bitterness.'

In the next letter from Sir Edmund Gosse, dated October 17, 1885, we return to 'At the Sign of the Lyre':

'I have been beguiled for a whole immoral hour into reading your book. You are a wonderful magician, and though I know

¹ Possibly this was that other biographer of Steele, the late G. A. Aitken.

almost everything by heart, the same spell has caught me, and I don't know in what strange little world of sandalwood, where the china figures have beating hearts and the pot-pourri is wet with real tears, it is that I have been living. Your art, your perfect mastery and skill, are an ever-growing wonder to me; and I think, if we miss something of the surprise of your first freshness, there is in these latest tales and fables something higher and rarer, a complete originality in resuscitation, the absolute newness of such utter oldness, that outvalues it.

'Your verses to me in the beginning of this copy are lovely, thank you so much. Before you get this I shall have gone off to Windsor, and by Monday you will have forgotten what follows: so I will say (in flying like one of your own abbé's or petits maitres) how great a treasure your old and lasting friendship is to me, the stimulus ever pointing me onwards, the sympathy ever helping me forwards.'

I find on reference to that beautiful privately printed catalogue of a portion of Sir Edmund Gosse's library appearing in 1893, and again to the fuller volume compiled by Mr. E. H. M. Cox in 1924, that the copy of the book referred to in this letter was one of the rare seventy-five large-paper copies. I say rare because I had to wait many years before I myself procured a copy for my extensive Austin Dobson collection. Of its companion volume, 'Old World Idylls,' issued in 1883 (of which there were only fifty large-paper copies), I procured a copy recently (1926) after waiting patiently for twenty years.

The inscription verses to which this letter alludes were included in the poet's 'Complete Poetical Works,' but I quote them here as an example of an art of which I think my father was a master in no small degree:

'To E. W. G.

"Book against book," "Agreed," I said:
But 'twas the truck of Diomed!
—And yet, in Fairy-land, I'm told
Dead Leaves—as these—will turn to gold.
Take them, Sir Alchemist, and see!
Nothing transmutes like sympathy.'

For the next twelve months I find nothing that need be recorded in full. A request by Lady Rosebery for some verses seems to have met with a ready response. Professor George Saintsbury

writes about a translation which I cannot locate. Alfred Austin deals at length and in most friendly fashion with 'At the Sign of the Lyre,' and Sir Leslie Stephen claims that his summer holiday was made all the pleasanter by the 'Life of Steele,' which appeared in 1886.

On November 16, 1886, Mr. Coventry Patmore wrote: 'I am much gratified to learn that my poems have found such acceptance with you. There is no one living who knows better than you do what good work of that sort means. The public cannot see that "easy reading's sometimes—hard writing."'

The last letter of 1886 (dated Dec. 31) is one from Sir Sidney Lee:

'I esteem very highly your kindness in sending me the volume of your poems which reached me to-day. I have been one of your public for a long time, which I flatter myself is the same thing as saying that I enjoy the good things of this life, and have often regretted that your volumes of poetry were not more numerous than they are. But to re-read a portion of your poems in a volume presented by the poet and bearing his autograph is a delight now in store for me and will, I fully expect, rival the charm of making a first acquaintance with your poetry. My regard for you as a poet which is of some years standing has been increased of late by my knowledge of the conscientious care which you unsparingly devote to your labours as a biographer.'

The first letter which I quote for the year 1887 strikes a rather new note. Practically all the letters quoted up to the present have dealt with my father's poetry or prose, and one may perhaps have almost justifiably forgotten that he was by profession a Civil Servant. In 1885 he attained the rank of Principal in the Marine Department of the Board of Trade. On March 1, 1887, the then President, Lord Stanley of Preston, wrote:

'You must allow me to thank you, on behalf of the Department—for the most clear and able memorandum which you have been good enough to prepare for the Cabinet, on the subject of Pilotage certificates.

'I know well how much labour and trouble it must have entailed upon you, and I am very much indebted to you for the clearness and impartiality with which you have placed the facts of the case before my colleagues and myself.'

I quote nothing more in 1887, but it is evident that the end of that year marked the beginning of a long and intermittent correspondence with the American book collector, Charles B. Foote,

who was most generous in keeping my father supplied with the productions of the Grolier Club, apparently by way of return for the volumes which my father sent him of his own as they came out. Early in 1926 I received a most interesting letter from Mr. Charles B. Foote's son in which he enclosed a list of no less than sixty-seven volumes (either wholly or partly by Austin Dobson), which had originally belonged to C. B. Foote and were now in his son's possession.

It appears that Mr. Foote's library was sold by auction in about 1895-6, during the owner's lifetime, but the Austin Dobson Collection was not included in the sale, and came into the possession of a book-collecting friend of the Foote family, whose extensive library was sold on his death in 1913. The sixty-seven Austin Dobson volumes, practically all first editions, and many of them containing inscriptions and autograph letters, were sold in one lot for \$725, and thereafter passed into the possession of the son of the original owner. It would be interesting to know what sort of price they would fetch at the present time, when inscription copies are so eagerly sought after.

There is nothing much to record in 1888, until E. A. Abbey writes from Broadway in Worcestershire on December 1, 1888, apologising for having disappointed my father about a set of drawings for the poem entitled the 'Noble Patron.'

The artist must evidently have subsequently changed his mind, because in an undated letter, evidently written a little later, a ribald drawing of the chief character in the poem appears on the fourth page, and the poem was finally illustrated—nearly a year later—in *Harper's Magazine*.

Early in 1889 I find a short note from J. Ashby Sterry, but the envelope was addressed in a novel manner :

'To Austin Dobson, Bard, Esquire
Who deftly twangs the graceful lyre,
With wondrous taste & feeling :
I trust this letter will arrive,
Quite safe & sound at Seventy-five,
In Eaton Rise, at Ealing !'

Later I find a note from Joseph Pennell, inviting my father to sup with the Johnson Club at the Cheshire Cheese, when 'Birrell will read a paper and Birkbeck Hill is to talk.'

There are no other letters calling for particular comment in this year, but I must not pass on without recording the fact that in 1889 my father spent a most delightful week or so at Broadway among his painter friends, F. D. Millet, E. A. Abbey, and Alfred Parsons; and I remember the pride with which he used to say that he had arranged the ivy round the hanging lamp bracket in Millet's picture 'Between two fires.' I really think that the stay at Broadway was one of the happiest things my father ever did.

The year 1890 saw the appearance of a very beautiful edition—produced in America—of 'Horace Walpole, A Memoir,' but there is rather a dearth of letters of any particular interest in that year.

In 1891 Austin Dobson was elected a member of the Athenæum by the Committee under Rule II, an event which had been previously prophesied by Lord Bowen in an undated letter which I have before me. The first letter of that year is one from Canon Alfred Ainger, who wrote on March 23: 'Let me send you a word of warm welcome to the Athenæum, where we shall, I hope, often meet. The Committee have done an excellent thing, and it will be universally appreciated.'

The next letter, dated August 27, 1891, relates to some verses which Sir William Watson wrote to my father in a copy of his 'Wordsworth's Grave.' These verses I quoted in the *London Mercury* for September 1924, in an article on my father's books. The letter runs:

'You are very generous in appreciation of my little verses, whose only merit is in giving expression, however inadequate, to my admiration of your exquisite work—an admiration, fortunately, shared by too many to be any sort of credit to him who utters or feels it. I sent the lines to the *Spectator* and had a proof this afternoon, so they will probably be in the next number. Would they were worthier of their theme!'

Two more letters of 1891 deal with the 'Life of William Hogarth,' which appeared in a revised and enlarged form in that year. Towards the end of the year I find a brief note from G. F. Watts, the painter, with regard to a photographic copy of 'Love and Death' which he presented to my father and now hangs in my house. Many years after, the artist paid a visit to Ealing, and brought with him a framed photograph of 'Good Luck to your Fishing,' a theme upon which my father had written some lines

which first appeared in the privately printed 'Carmina Votiva' of 1900. That G. F. Watts admired my father's work may be gathered from the postscript to the above letter: 'I don't think my works can give you as much pleasure as yours give to me and my wife.'

In 1892 there appeared a collection of poems under the title 'The Ballad of Beau Brocade,' with delightful illustrations by Hugh Thomson, that life-long friend, who had already firmly established himself as a charming portrayer of eighteenth-century life and manners.

I think I may safely say that the book was a great success, but how seriously the artist took the matter of the illustrations (which were beautiful) is evident from the following letter (one of many) written from Seaford and dated July 4 :

'I have received your very kind and forbearing note and feel so compunctious that I should make you so anxious. Since I came here I have not been engaged on anything else and the length of time occupied arises out of a seizure I sometimes have in which all ability to draw seems to leave me, so that nothing seems to come right. Nothing does seem to come right so far as distinction and charm are concerned, and one must *try* in these drawings for some faint breath of these qualities. Because I so felt my weakness, the first poem which I attacked was "Beau Brocade" and I am now engaged on "A Gentleman of the Old School." If you only realised what the music of these lines and those of "The Gentlewoman" and "A Dead Letter" makes me feel you would understand the despairing sense of inability to suggest them. Please do not augur well from my misgivings. That makes me sorry that I told you of them.

"The Ladies of St. James's" and "The Old Sedan Chair" were the two poems which you mentioned should I not be able to make up the number with those already mentioned. One of these was put out of the list by your remembering that Mr. Abbey had illustrated it. I cannot remember which it was but there is so much in the four Poems that I do not believe either will be necessary.

'I am devoting this week to getting the work I have done through and if you would prefer it I would take them up. Every Wednesday I can get up and down in the same day for a few shillings, and if you could see me in the middle of the day I should be so much obliged. I could then see the Process people and there should be no delay there if strong representation was made to them. My old people would be sure to do the work speedily and to our

liking as they are so thoroughly acquainted with it now. However I suppose Messrs. Kegan Paul have their own people for that work.

'On Wednesday week then if that will be convenient for you I shall run up with as many drawings as I can get through. After that, I shall send them by dozens and half-dozens.'

A little later in 1892 I find what must have been, I think, a very early communication from Thomas Hardy relating to a signed copy of 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles,' which he had presented to my father. From the recently published 'History of the Athenæum,' I notice that Thomas Hardy and my father were elected members under Rule II on the same day, and they often met there.

On November 2, 1892, Alfred Austin, who had evidently received a copy of the 'Ballad of Beau Brocade,' wrote :

'I have been renewing, and extending my acquaintance with your polite and sociable Muse, and am confirmed in the partiality I have long felt for her. More and more I turn away from the performers who thump the lyre, on which you play with fine modulation. If I were to have all the pieces that linger with me, I should weary you. But let me single out, from the ones that are new to me, "The Ballad of Prose and Rhyme." That is the way to think, and that is also the way to write. You see I avail myself of the privilege of friendship, to presume to praise.'

In the same year appeared what was—if we except 'Four Frenchwomen'—virtually the first of my father's volumes of eighteenth-century essays—there are now eleven volumes in all—'Eighteenth-Century Vignettes.'

Mr. Richard le Gallienne, on November 16, 1892, acknowledged a copy of the book, in the following terms :

'I am much indebted to you for your kindness in sending me your delightful *Vignettes*. I have not yet read all, but the book has been my companion since it came, and I have read more than enough to thank you for them most sincerely.

'I think I am most touched by your picture of Fielding leaving Fordhook for the last time. I suppose it occurred in your "Chiswick Press" edition of the "Journal"¹ but that I have not seen.

'Gray's and Goldsmith's Library I, naturally, made for at once. One always loves you when you write about Goldsmith. "Prior's Kitty," "A Garret in Gough Square" also especially

¹ Fielding's *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon*, Chiswick Press, 1891.

charmed me, and you have given me a clearer view of Vauxhall than I ever had before.

'But I will not further particularise, for, much as your essays delight me, there is something in your volume that delights me more than any one of them ; at that I keep every now and then taking furtive peeps, to glow accordingly : I mean the inscription.

'I believe I once naïvely confessed to you that it had been one of my boyish dreams some day to know you : judge then how happy you make that "boy" within me by so cherishable a gift as this copy of your book actually inscribed to me.

'Let me not forget to thank you for your great kindness to my "Wonder-Child."'

The same book drew the following letter, dated Nov. 18, 1892, from Canon Ainger :

'My best thanks for your kind thought of me. I shall read your alluring essays with real interest. I have not much leisure just now for *anything*—correspondence and business crowding on me, as I approach this change of occupation and residence that is before me—but which will not, I hope, cut me off from London altogether—for Cambridge is only an hour and a quarter distant. I wish they would make you Laureate—I cannot *say* whether you would be the right man in the right place—but *this* I know, that you alone among most of the possible candidates, would invest everything you wrote with "charm"—and it is this and not merely "style," that is the true "anti-septic." . . .

'I should so much like to give you one of my Lamb books—Which would you choose ? If you have not the later edition of the *Elia*, may I send that ?—for it contains many additions and corrections in the notes.'

At the end of 1892 I find a small posse of letters from Sir Bernard Partridge, whose great admiration of my father's work ripened into his doing a charming set of illustrations for the edition of 'Proverbs in Porcelain' which appeared in 1893.

How the partnership began is revealed in a letter dated December 9, 1892, which reads as follows :

'I met Mr. Hugh Thomson last night, and talking with him of his illustrations to "Beau Brocade," I heard—with as much surprise as pleasure—that you were anxious that I should illustrate some others of your poems—I think he specified those in the French manner. Before deciding to write to you, that there might be no mistake I made him repeat his statement solemnly and with

circumstance ; but he did not modify it : so that I now make bold to write and ask you to confirm it—or repudiate it without scruple if Thomson has bungled.

‘For there is no task I would more willingly set myself—or more reverently try to carry out. The names of many of the ballads occur at once, which I have always wanted to try my hand at : and if this news be true it would be a real pleasure—and so little illustration-work is that—to be allowed to make the attempt. I hope you will let me know.’

The last letter of 1892 which I quote is a brief one from Sir Walter Besant, to whom the second series of ‘Eighteenth Century Vignettes,’ appearing in 1894, was dedicated :

‘Did I thank you for your gift of the new book ? I am not certain but I have since read the book and I venture to congratulate you upon it. I think it is in every way most charming. You have taken the scholars of the 18th century. I have written four novels upon the people of the 18th century. Their ways are not the ways of your scholars—but all are delightful. Never was there such a century.’

On March 12, 1893, I find that Henry Morley wrote :

‘Hearty thanks to you for the charming Edition of Fielding’s “Voyage to Lisbon” and for the kind words that came with it. I had not seen the book and at once read your Preface and notes, with great interest. Your information about the two issues is specially valuable and your theory that the second was a product of the Lisbon earthquake doubtless right. I have lately treated myself to your little collection of “Eighteenth Century Vignettes” and to your “Ballad of Beau Brocade” in its delightful new edition with Hugh Thomson’s illustrations. Long may you live and write. It is not often that a student of literature who voices the public ear excels alike in grace and knowledge, as you surely do. I send by parcel post with this an idle book of more than thirty years ago lately reprinted, a book I don’t venture to send to any but near friends and those in whom I have faith that they possess one of the virtues of your “Gentlewoman of the Old School” whose “softest word was for the erring.”’

As I have already observed above, the year 1890 was marked by the production in America of a very beautiful Memoir of Horace Walpole. A second edition appeared in 1893, concurrently in

America and England. It is to this second edition that the following letter, from Sir Henry Lucy, dated June 11, 1893, relates :

‘ Horace Walpole, at any time a pleasant writer, looked in on me yesterday at a peculiarly fortunate time. I was just leaving town for our cottage here [Hythe] by the sea where I find my only opportunity of reading a book. So I brought the dainty volume with me, and have been reading it nearly all day with great delight.

‘ It was very good of you to think of me. I shall always treasure the recollection and the book.’

One of the earliest copies of ‘ Proverbs in Porcelain,’ mentioned above, seems to have gone to T. Anstey Guthrie, whose immortal volumes of ‘ Voces Populi ’ and ‘ The Man from Blankley’s ’ were also illustrated by the same artist. I always remember the joy with which my father received from the artist the original drawing of Mr. and Mrs. Ditchwater, from ‘ The Man from Blankley’s,’ on the back of which, incidentally, was an incomplete trial drawing for one of the illustrations to the ‘ Proverbs.’

Mr. Guthrie’s letter is dated November 16, 1893, and reads :

‘ I wish I could express all my gratitude to you for remembering your promise and sending me an early copy of your delightful “Proverbs in Porcelain”—with such an inscription—I am sure you know how keenly I enjoy and admire your work and how proud I am to possess this volume. I don’t think our common friend Partridge has ever done anything so charming as the illustrations—but then he has never before had such an opportunity. With heartiest thanks and congratulations.’

In spite of this genuine praise of the drawings, it is perhaps interesting to note, from a letter—which I find among my father’s—addressed by the artist to Cosmo Monkhouse, that the artist was by no means satisfied with his drawings, some of which he describes as ‘ entire failures.’ Certainly my father never thought so. It would hardly, however, be right to leave this subject without quoting the opinion of Hugh Thomson, who, as has already been seen, first communicated to Bernard Partridge the intimation that my father would like him to illustrate some of his poems. The letter, which is undated, reads :

‘ I have just received the beautiful book and before starting for town must write a line of warm thanks for your thought of me, and warm congratulations on the exquisite result of the combined labours of Partridge and yourself. I do not wonder at the intense

satisfaction which you expressed about the illustrations. They are I should say about the most beautiful things barring Abbey which I have seen. I think it is a good sign for the success of the book with the public that Jessie¹ is charmed with the drawings both as illustrations of the text and as decorations.'

'Proverbs in Porcelain' appeared, of course, concurrently in America, and on Christmas Day, 1893, C. B. Foote wrote :

'On Saturday last I called at Dodd Mead & Co., to get a copy of "Proverbs in Porcelain" and was informed by Dodd that although the Christmas business is not up to the average of years past yet they could not complain. I asked about the success of "Proverbs in Porcelain" and was told that Sales were very satisfactory. I think had they been able to offer it a month earlier they might have taken many more orders. I hope it will prove profitable to you. It has rejoiced my heart exceedingly.

'I hope you are making good headway with your catalogue. Print one hundred copies at least, that I may have fifteen for my friends here—I could get but ten from Gosse and in consequence there are many whose appeals I had to deny.'

The allusion to a 'catalogue' is interesting. In 1893 the catalogue of a portion of Sir Edmund Gosse's Library, compiled by R. J. Lister, had appeared in a sumptuous form, and limited to sixty copies. No doubt this event tended to start an epidemic in library catalogues. At all events it is certain that my father entertained the idea, because I possess a trial page or two on quarto paper with certain entries from the projected catalogue actually set up in type. Why it was abandoned I do not know, but at the head of a similar page preserved in one of my father's scrap books are the words 'not proceeded with,' a decision taken early in 1894.

Only one other letter in 1893 seems worth recording, one from Robert Bridges, the present Poet Laureate. He wrote on October 26, 1893, regarding a book he had presented to my father :

'Your not posting the letter, after you had written it was a delightful finish to your concerns, which I should be grieved I had brought upon you without some encouragement. But did you not at Gosse's, say that you would like to have the book? and if so, that was also a sufficient reception. I am sure that you cannot really imagine that your delaying to acknowledge it when it came could make any difference.

¹ Mrs. Hugh Thomson.

'A book on prosody¹ is no doubt a "choke-fear" (whatever that may be. I use the word in confidence that you will understand it). I used to think that a 5 Act Drama was the best thing of that kind : now I can do better.

'Still I hope that some of the "Appendix" may interest you. Your apologies entail this pleasant occasion of writing to you. I hope that you enjoyed your holiday at Seaford, and are not too much worked now you are back again in town. I wish that I could give you some of my leisure, you would use it far better than I can.

'I have been sorry to miss several articles concerning myself which my friends tell me have been drawn from the critics by Mr. Miles' book, but I suppose that I have not lost anything very amusing. I am now publishing a new Comedy and some Lyrics in America.'

¹ This volume was the writer's *Milton's Prosody*.

LITERARY ACROSTICS.

THE EDITOR OF THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE offers prizes to the value of at least £3 to the most successful solvers of this series of four Literary Acrostics. There will also be consolation prizes, two or more in number: the winners of these will be entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue. And, further, every month a similar prize of books will be awarded to the sender of the correct solution that is opened first.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 50.

(The Second of the Series.)

' Full many a gem, of ——— ray ———,
 The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
 Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
 And waste its sweetness on the desert air.'

1. ' With two tame leopards couch'd beside her throne,
 All beauty compass'd in a female form.'
2. ' A spring of love gushed from my heart,
 And I blessed them ———.'
3. ' The hand of the ———
 Takes the ears of the hoary,
 But the voice of the weeper
 Wails manhood in glory.'
4. ' Rome, for ——— far renown'd,
 Tramples on a thousand states.'
5. ' To ——— delights, and live laborious days.'
6. ' Of the ——— hundred grant but ———,
 To make a new Thermopylae!'

RULES

1. Only one answer may be sent to each light.
2. Every correct light and upright will score one point.
3. With his answer every solver must send the coupon that is printed on page x of 'Book Notes' in the preliminary pages of this issue.
4. At the foot of his answer every solver must write his pseudonym (consisting of one word), and nothing else. His name and address should be written at the back.
5. Solvers must on no account write either the quotations or the references on the same paper as their answers. It is not necessary, or even desirable, to send them at all.
6. Solvers who write a second letter to correct a previous answer, must send the complete solution as they wish it, and not merely state the desired alteration.
7. Answers to Acrostic No. 50 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE, 50A Albemarle Street, London, W. 1, and must arrive not later than October 20.

ANSWER TO No. 49.		PROEM: <i>Hamlet</i> , iii. 1.	
1. S	ilvi	A	LIGHTS:
2. L	aughte	R	1. <i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i> , iv. 2.
3. I	slande	R	2. <i>Twelfth Night</i> , ii. 3.
4. N	er	O	3. <i>The Tempest</i> , ii. 2.
5. G	ro	W	4. <i>King Lear</i> , iii. 6.
6. S	tone	S	5. <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> , iii. 2.
			6. <i>As you like it</i> , ii. 1.

RESULT OF 'WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE' LITERARY CROSSWORD.

The first three correct solutions opened were sent in by Miss Argles, Spinney Piece, Bagley Wood, Oxford; Miss Mary Liberty, 29 Upper Park Fields, Putney, S.W. 15; Mrs. A. D. Godley, Chalmers, Wallingford, Berks; and they will choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue.

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